

THE
FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY
AND
HIS RELIGION.
AN
INTRODUCTION
TO
THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THIRD EDITION.

“Immortal East ! dear land of glorious lays,
Lo, here the ‘UNKNOWN GOD’ of thy unconscious praise.”

M A D R A S :
PRINTED FOR THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY
AND
THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY.

S. P. C. K. PRESS, VEPERY,

1892.

PRINTED AT THE S. P. C. K. PRESS, VEPEBY, MADRAS.—1892.*

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INTRODUCTION.

I. THE CLAIMS OF JESUS CHRIST TO ATTENTION.

"JESUS of Nazareth," says the late Dean Stanley, "was, on the most superficial no less than on the deepest view we take of His coming, the greatest name, the most extraordinary power, that has ever crossed the stage of History." An eminent French writer says that the "History of the World resolves itself entirely into two periods—that which preceded Christ's appearance, and that which followed it."

"What think ye of Christ?" says Liddon. "Is He a subject of the highest historical interest? No educated man, at least, whatever be his faith or his life, can deny the reality or the greatness of Christ's place in human history. Nothing is more certain in

the annals of mankind than this, that Jesus Christ lived in Palestine, and was put to death eighteen and a half centuries ago. This fact belongs to general human knowledge just as much as does the life of Julius Cæsar, or of Alexander the Great, or of Socrates, or of Mahomet. Nobody, indeed, does deny the general fact. And if even this be admitted, the life and death of Jesus Christ must possess for any intelligent man the highest possible degree of interest. He must feel that, in point of social and historical importance, it stands alone. Who can deny, that at this moment, explain it how we will, Jesus Christ, His life, His work, His Person, lives in the hearts of multitudes as the object of most cherished and devoted homage; that He governs the ideas, the aspirations, the social and political action of millions of mankind; that the most active and enterprising section of the human family, still, in various senses, places itself under the shadow of His Name and patronage; and that if He has many opponents, there is no serious probability of His being spiritually or intellectually dethroned? All this is a matter of simple observation. The truth of it is most obvious to those who know most about human affairs and human history. And it at once invests the earthly Life of Christ, and all that illustrates and belongs to it with the highest practical and speculative interest; with the interest which belongs to the great problems of past history, and with the interest which belongs to those great living forces that make themselves felt day by day around us, and contribute powerfully towards determining the current of events. Not to be interested in the life of Jesus Christ, then, is to be, I do not say irreligious, but unintelligent. It is to be insensible to the nature and claims of the most powerful force

that has over moulded the thought and swayed the destinies of civilised men.”*

In this Introduction only a few points can be briefly noticed. Details will be given in succeeding chapters.

Among the claims of Jesus Christ to attention, the following may be mentioned†:—

1. **The Circumstances under which He was brought up.**—Until thirty years of age, His life was spent “in the most despised village of the most despised province of a conquered land.” The son of a village carpenter, Himself following the same trade, He was not, like Moses, “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.” “The very leisure for study had been denied Him by the stern conditions of working-life, and the taunt of scorn is instantly cast upon His pretensions, ‘Is not this the carpenter?’ ‘How knoweth this man letters having never learned?’”

2. **His short Public Ministry.**—Moses was the leader and teacher of the Israelites for forty years. Buddha began his mendicant life when about thirty, and died in his eightieth year. Mahomet claimed to have received his first revelation in the fortieth year of his age, and died when about sixty-three.

“Unbidden and unknown, Jesus comes forth. Without patronage from the rich, without countenance from the learned, without sympathy from the men of His own nation, He emerges from the deep seclusion of Nazareth,—a friendless artisan Prophet, to bear His resistless testimony against superstition, against hypocrisy, against a corrupt priesthood,

* Abridged from *Some Elements of Religion*. Other extracts are from the same work.

† His miracles will form the subject of a separate chapter.

against all falsehood, and against all sin. He gathers a little band around Him,—obscure in station like Himself, and after having travelled with this handful of disciples over the cities and villages of Palestine, and having, in the course of His journeys, given to them a body of teaching unsurpassed for the purity of its precepts, the sublimity of its doctrines, and the augustness of its disclosures,—after a ministry of three short years, and under a ban of infamy and disgrace, He dies.

“Does the history of philosophy, of legislation, of any achieved success of the human mind furnish any parallel to this? Is it possible, upon ordinary human conditions, to explain how an obscure, unbefriended mechanic, beginning his teaching labours at thirty years of age, and dying at thirty-three, could, in that brief interval, secure the establishment of a system, which should effect an entire revolution of human thought, and sweep the most hoary superstitions from the face of the earth?”*

3. **His Teaching.**—The following is a short summary :—

“His words have been like leaven cast into the mass of humanity. He made religion spiritual instead of ceremonial and external; universal, instead of local. He gave us the magnificent dowry of faith in One Common Father of the whole human race, and, thus, of a world-wide brotherhood of all mankind. He confirmed the doctrine of our immortality, and scattered abroad the germs of a heavenly life by His fundamental requirements of love to God and our neighbour. All reforms of individual and public life lie veiled in these principles, awaiting the advance of our moral sense, to

* Moore's *Age and the Gospel*, pp. 72, 74.

apprehend and apply them. They have already given freedom to the slave; raised woman; purified morals; mitigated wars; created liberty; and made humanity a growing force, in things private, civil, and political. All that love to our fellow-men can prompt finds itself only a copy of that life which was spent in continually doing good, and the noblest self-sacrifice for others finds itself anticipated by Calvary. To the individual Christian, JESUS is the Divine Saviour, to believe in Whom is life everlasting; to know Whom is to have peace with God.”*

4. **His Character.**—“It is not in the unrivalled exhibition of any one form of human excellence, whether purity or humility, or charity, or courage, or veracity, or self-denial, or justice, or consideration for others, that we best appreciate the significance of our Lord’s human character. It is in the equal balance of all excellence, in the absence of any warping, disturbing, exaggerating influence, that modern writers have been forward to recognize a moral sublimity, which they can discover nowhere else in history.”†

5. **His Claims.**—“The unbounded personal pretensions which Christ advances, remain throughout a subject of ever-recurring astonishment.” “That which is so striking, so overpowering in the Gospels is perhaps less the precise language which our Lord uses about Himself, than the consistent bearing which He assumes towards His disciples and mankind. His attitude is that of One who takes His claims for granted; who has no errors to confess, no demands to explain, or to apologize for; no restraining instinct of self-distrust to keep

* Geikie’s *Life of Christ*, Preface, ix, x.

† Liddon.

Him in the background; no shrinking from high command, based upon a sense of the possible superiority of those around Him. It is the bearing of One who claims to be the First of all, the centre of all, with entire simplicity indeed, but also with unhesitating decision.”*

6. **His Influence.**—Jesus said that He was a King, although His Kingdom was not a temporal sovereignty; His reign was to endure for ever; and ultimately He was to be acknowledged by the whole human race. “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.” What human foresight could have anticipated the fact, that the crucifixion of a Galilean peasant would form the most attractive influence which has been exerted on the hearts of men, throughout all succeeding ages!” Christianity has made the cross, “the instrument of a slave’s agony, a symbol more glorious than the diadem of kings.”

The whole force of the Roman Empire, the most powerful the world ever saw, was exerted for more than two centuries to support heathenism, and prevent the spread of the Gospel. Principal Cairns thus describes the extirpation by Christianity of idolatry, such as it existed in the old Roman world:—

“That system, from the Euphrates to the farthest shore of Britain, from the Nile to the forests of Germany, has utterly passed away. The whole regions around the Mediterranean, to the limits of civilization and beyond them, have ‘changed their gods’; and though something, as time advanced, may be claimed for Mahommedanism, the great, decisive, all-prevailing impulses have come from

* Liddon.

Christianity. The classic Paganism, Greek and Roman, the Syrian, the Egyptian, the North African, the Druidic, and ultimately the Teutonic, have all fallen to rise no more ; and at this moment there is not on the face of the earth a single worshipper of 'the great goddess Diana,' or 'the image that fell down from Jupiter,' of Baal or Dagon, of Isis or Serapis, of Thor or Wodin."

A movement has already commenced which will lead to a like change in Asia. The temples of Vishnu and Siva, the shrines of Buddha and Confucius, will yet be similarly deserted, and from East to West, only one God, "Our Father in heaven," will be acknowledged.

From the earliest times the enemies of Christianity have been predicting its speedy extinction ;* but it holds on its course, triumphing over every obstacle.

"Nations pass away," said Napoleon Bonaparte ; "Thrones crumble ; but the Church remains. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius ? Upon force. Jesus Christ alone founded His empire upon love ; and at this hour, millions of men would die for Him."

"Truth should embrace the universe. Such is Christianity ;—the only religion which destroys sectional prejudices ; the only one which proclaims the unity and the absolute brotherhood of the whole human family ; the only one which is purely spiritual ; in fine, the only one which assigns to all, without distinction, for a true country, the bosom of the Creator, God."

* One of the latest was by Colonel Olcott, who said that Madame Blavatsky was to tear "Christianity to tatters."

7. **Testimonies to Jesus Christ.**—The following extracts show how Jesus Christ has been regarded by noted men of different opinions and countries :

Keshab Chandra Sen says :—

“I cherish the profoundest reverence for the character of Jesus, and the lofty ideal of moral truth which he taught and lived.”

Goethe, the great German writer, says :—

“I esteem the Gospels to be thoroughly genuine, for there shines forth from them the reflected splendour of a sublimity, proceeding from the person of Jesus Christ, and of as divine a kind as was ever manifested upon earth.”

Richter, another German writer, calls Jesus

“The purest of the mighty, the mightiest among the pure, who, with His pierced hands, raised up empires from their foundations, turned the stream of history from its old channel, and still continues to rule and guide the ages.”

Rousseau, a distinguished French writer of the last century, says :—

“Can a book, at once so sublime and wise, be the work of man? Can the person, whose history it relates, be Himself a man? Does it contain the language of an enthusiast or an ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in His manners! What affecting goodness in His instructions! What sublimity in His maxims! What profound wisdom in His discourses! What presence of mind! What ingenuity of justice in His replies! Whence could Jesus have derived among His countrymen this elevated and pure morality, of which He alone has given the precept and example? From the bosom of the most furious bigotry, the most exalted wisdom is heard, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues honours the vilest of the people. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a philosopher, the life and death of Jesus Christ are those of a God.”

Renan, a brilliant French writer of the present days, says :—

“Jesus is in every respect unique, and nothing can be compared with Him. This Christ of the Gospels is the most

beauteous incarnation of God, in the fairest of forms, viz., moral man—God in man. For long ages yet He is King. His beauty is eternal, His reign shall have no end. So long as one noble heart shall yearn after moral beauty, whilst one lofty soul shall be seized with joyful ecstasy before the realization of the divine, Christ will have worshippers by reason of the part of His being which is truly eternal."

John Stuart Mill says :—

"Whatever else may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left—a unique figure, not more unlike all His precursors than all His followers, even those who had the direct benefit of His personal teaching. It is of no use to say that Christ, as exhibited in the Gospels, is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of His followers. Who among His disciples, or among their proselytes, was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee—still less the early Christian writers. About the life and sayings of Jesus, there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight which must place the prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in His inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching upon this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live than Christ would approve our life."

Carlyle says :—

"The tidings of the most important event ever transacted in the world is the life and death of the divine Man in Judea, at once the symptom and cause of immeasurable changes to all people in the world.

"Jesus of Nazareth, our divinest symbol! Higher has the human thoughts not reached. A symbol of quite

perennial, infinite character, whose significance will ever demand to be anew inquired into, and anew made manifest."

Lecky, the English historian, thus shows the effects of Christ's life :—

"It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world, a character, which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love : has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, temperaments, and conditions ; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice ; and has exercised so deep an influence, that the simple record of three years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the discussions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists."

JESUS, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills the breast ;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.

No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Thy blest name,
O Saviour of mankind.

O Hope of every contrite heart,
O Joy of all the meek,
To those who fall how kind Thou art,
How good to those who seek !

But what to those who find ? Ah ! this
Nor tongue nor pen can show ;
The love of JESUS, what it is,
None but His loved ones know.

JESUS, our only joy be Thou,
As Thou our Prize wilt be ;
In Thee be all our glory now,
And through eternity.

St. Bernard.

II. THE PREPARATION FOR CHRIST.

The First Promise.—In many parts of the world there are traditions of a golden age. They existed among the ancient Greeks and Romans, as well as among the Hindus of the present day. Probably they arose from the fact that God created Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, perfectly holy, and placed them in the garden of Eden, with every thing around fitted to minister to their happiness.

Tempted by Satan, the evil spirit, in the form of a serpent, our first parents soon fell from their state of innocence by disobeying God, and the sentence was pronounced, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Still, before Adam and Eve were sent out of Paradise, the promise was graciously given that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, or that One, descended from Eve, would overcome Satan. Through Him, we may obtain entrance to an abode far happier than the garden of Eden with all its delights.

Divine Incarnations.—The idea of God taking a human body is familiar to the Hindus. The reputed avatáras of Vishnu are well known. Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita: "Whensoever religion fades and irreligion prevails, then I produce myself." The expectation is general that at the close of the Kali Yug, the Kalki avatára will come, when Vishnu, on a white horse, will destroy the wicked, and restore the earth to its original purity.

Glimpses of great truths are to be found in such conceptions. They show the belief that the salvation of the world is beyond human power, and requires Divine interposition. Another idea is that as it was man who sinned, his saviour, to suffer in his

room, must partake of his nature. Teaching by example is far more effective than mere precept. A Divine incarnation can so display the beauties of holiness, that our hearts will be drawn towards them with an influence impossible in any other way. Humanity also yearns for one who can sympathise with it in its troubles. All these requirements are met in Jesus Christ, the spotless Avatára.

It should be understood that the incarnation of Christ—"God manifest in the flesh"—differs in several most important respects from Hindu incarnations. Still, they have some ideas in common.

Sacrifices.—In the early ages of the world, people were very much like children. It is not known when writing was invented, but even for many centuries after books were in existence, very few could read. Teaching through something that could be seen, was therefore necessary.

The feeling is universal that man is a sinner, and that sin deserves punishment. Hence sacrifices have existed during all ages, and among all nations. The idea that pervades sacrifice is *substitution*. The offerer sometimes laid his hand on the head of the victim, saying, "I give thee this life instead of mine." He acknowledged his guilt; but hoped that God would accept the sacrifice in his stead.

Sacrifices prevailed largely among the old Aryans. "The most prominent feature of the Vedic religion," says the Rev. K. S. Macdonald, "is its sacrifices. Scarcely a hymn is found in which sacrifice is not alluded to. The very first verse of the very first hymn runs: 'I glorify Agni, the *purohit* of the sacrifice.'" Another hymn says: "Do thou lead us safe through all sins by the way of sacrifice." The *Tandya Maha Brahmana* of the *Sama Veda* says of sacrifice: "Whatever sins we

have committed, knowing or unknowing, thou art the annulment thereof. Thou art the annulment of sin—of sin."

The same *Brahmana* contains the remarkable statement that "Prajapati, the Lord of creatures, offered himself a sacrifice for the benefit of the *devas*." Max Müller, referring to the whole continent of Africa, says: "Wherever we now see kraals and cattle-pens depend upon it there was to be seen once, as there is to be seen even now, the smoke of sacrifices rising up from earth to heaven."

Sacrifices were appointed by God to show that sorrow for sin is not enough; that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." But animal sacrifices were only like a shadow of the great sacrifice that was to be offered, and their chief object was to keep it in remembrance. After the death of the Divine Incarnation, they were to cease.

The Jewish high priest and the whole of the temple service, were typical of Christ.

Prophecies of a Saviour.—It has been mentioned that before our first parents left Eden, they were told of a coming Deliverer. This promise was repeated in various ways during the next four thousand years.

As men increased in numbers, they became more and more wicked, till at last the earth was filled with violence. God then destroyed by a flood all the people, except a good man, called Noah, and his family, who were saved in a kind of ship. A tradition of this is found in India. An account is given in the Vedas of Manu being saved in a ship, which was fastened to a peak of the Himalayas, and becoming the second father of the human race.

Even after the flood, when men multiplied, they grew worse and worse; the one true God was for-

gotten, and idolatry was openly practised as early as the days of Shem, the son of Noah. God chose a single nation, to be kept separate from all others, to preserve a knowledge of Himself. The great ancestor of this nation was called Abraham. He first lived between the rivers Euphrates and Tigris; but God told him to go to a land which He would show him. This country was Canaan, or Palestine, on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. It was to be given to the descendants of Abraham, in one of whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed. Jacob, a grandson of Abraham, was afterwards called Israel. He and his family went to Egypt, where they greatly increased in numbers. Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, cruelly oppressed them; but under Moses as their leader, they were delivered, and brought to Canaan. During the life-time of Moses, a body of laws was given them, suited to their condition. Moses told the Israelites that God would raise up a prophet from among them, like himself, to whom they were to listen. This was about fifteen centuries before He came.

During the next thousand years, different prophets foretold many events connected with the promised Saviour. The time was mentioned; He was to belong to the tribe of Judah and the family of David; the place was named Bethlehem; He was to be born of a virgin; He was to have a fore-runner; He was to perform wonderful works, yet He was to be despised, rejected, and put to death; His hands and feet were to be pierced; lots were to be cast for his garments; He was to be buried in a rich man's grave; but He was to rise from the dead, and establish a kingdom which would have no end.

These prophecies were first written in the Hebrew

language, and are contained in that part of the Christian Scriptures, called the *Old Testament*. The Old Testament was translated into Greek at Alexandria during the third century before Christ. The predictions about Jesus Christ were certainly written hundreds of years before He came into the world.

The Roman Empire.—The influence of this in preparing the world for the spread of Christianity, will be explained in a subsequent chapter.

The **NEW TESTAMENT**, which describes the fulfilment of the prophecies about a Saviour, will next be noticed.

PROPHECIES OF CHRIST.

HAIL to the Lord's Anointed,
Great David's greater Son;
Hail, in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun;
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free,
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.

He shall come down like showers
Upon the fruitful earth;
And love, joy, hope, like flowers,
Spring, in His path, to birth.
Before Him on the mountains
Shall peace, the herald, go;
And righteousness, in fountains,
From hill to valley flow.

Kings shall bow down before Him,
And gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore Him,
His praise all people sing:
To Him shall prayer unceasing
And daily vows ascend,
His kingdom still increasing,
A kingdom without end.

O'er every foe victorious,
 He on His throne shall rest ;
 From age to age more glorious,
 All-blessing and all-blest.
 The tide of time shall never
 His covenant remove ;
 His Name shall stand for ever,—
 That Name to us is Love.

Montgomery.

III. THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The Title.—THE NEW TESTAMENT OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, is the full English title of the collection of books, containing the Life of Jesus Christ, and the teaching of His Apostles. In Greek, the language in which it was first written, it is simply called *The New Covenant*. This name was given to distinguish it from the *Old Covenant*. The word *Testament* comes through the Latin translation.

JESUS* means *Saviour*. CHRIST means *anointed*. Kings and priests were set apart by anointing them with oil. *Jesus Christ* means the anointed, or the appointed, Saviour. The Hebrew name for Christ, having the same meaning, is MESSIAH.

The whole volume containing the Christian sacred books is generally called the BIBLE, or the Holy BIBLE. The word *Bible* comes from a Greek word, signifying *book*. It was first used in the plural, "*The books* ;" in modern languages it has become a singular noun. The oldest name, *The Scripture*, or *The Scriptures*, comes from the Latin word, signifying *writing*. The WORD OF GOD is another expressive term.

* *Jesus* is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Joshua*.

Though the Bible, taken together, forms a complete whole, it is really a collection of sixty-six books, written by forty authors, over a space of about fifteen centuries. It consists of two great divisions—the *Old Testament*, written before the birth of Christ, and the *New Testament*, after His ascension to heaven. *ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη*.

The word *covenant* means *agreement*. The Old Covenant was made with the Israelites through Moses; the *New Covenant* came through Jesus Christ. The word *Testament* means *will*, a writing by which a person shows what is to be done with his property after his death. The New Testament may be said to contain the will of Jesus Christ, sealed with His own blood.

When Written.—Jesus Christ Himself wrote nothing. Oral teaching was for several years the only means employed in the spread of Christianity. The Apostles, men sent out by Jesus Christ to make known His Gospel, were eye-witnesses from the beginning, and they simply told what they had seen and heard. The Apostle Paul was specially appointed to preach to the Gentiles, or the nations other than Jews. He visited a number of cities where Christian congregations were formed. It was for the guidance of these young converts that the earliest writings of the New Testament were composed. Of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, twenty-one are letters of this kind. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians, Christians in Europe, are supposed to be among the first. They were probably written about twenty years after the death of Christ. As Paul was beheaded by the Roman Emperor Nero about 67 A.D., his last epistle must have been written before that date.

It was desirable that the Apostles should leave

behind them correct accounts of the life of Christ. Four books were written by different persons. Those by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, were probably composed between 60 and 66 A.D. The fourth book, by the Apostle John, who lived to a great age, dates from about the close of the century. These accounts are called *Gospels* in the English language. The word *Gospel* means *good news*. The name was first given to the message; and afterwards to the books in which it is contained. The writers are called *Evangelists*, from a Greek word signifying *makers known of good news*. The *Acts of the Apostles*, written by Luke, contains the early history of the Christian Church. The last book of the New Testament, the *Revelation, things made known*, of the Apostle John, consists chiefly of visions which God gave him of future events.

The whole of the New Testament was written within about sixty years after the death of Christ.

The Gospels.—The Gospels do not give a complete history of the life of Christ, they are rather *memoirs*,—things remembered. They “record such facts and discourses as explain the nature, and prove to different readers, the divine origin of the Christian faith.” “These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing ye might have life through His name.” (John xx. 31.) Each of the Gospels will be briefly noticed.

MATTHEW.—The Gospel placed first, was written by Matthew, a Jew. Before he became a disciple of Christ, he was called Levi, and was a publican, or tax-gatherer. He collected the customs paid at a city called Capernaum. This Gospel was intended specially for his countrymen. The author, therefore, does not give any explanation of Jewish cus-

toms. "It presents Christ as the last and greatest Prophet and Lawgiver, as the Fulfiller of the Old Testament, as the Messiah and King of the true people of Israel." The arrangement is not strictly in the order of time, as it groups together similar works and sayings of Christ. The descent of Christ, through His reputed father, is traced back to Abraham, and there are many quotations from the Old Testament prophecies which are declared to be fulfilled in Christ.

MARK.—Mark, or John Mark, was a Jew, probably a native of Jerusalem, where his mother Mary resided (Acts xii. 12). He was the companion of Paul for some years, as also of the Apostle Peter, from whom he obtained some of the materials for his Gospel. Mark wrote for the instruction of his Roman converts. Jewish customs are therefore explained. He dwells upon the *actions* rather than the *teaching* of Christ. His Gospel abounds with word pictures, which bring the scenes vividly before the mind.

LUKE.—The author of this Gospel was a Gentile convert, a companion of Paul, who calls him the "beloved physician" (Colossians iv. 14). He acknowledges that he had not himself seen what he describes, but his account was carefully collected from persons who had "been eye-witnesses from the beginning." This Gospel, addressed to a convert, called Theophilus,* was written specially for Gentile Christians. Luke follows the order of time more than the other evangelists, and he links Gospel facts with other events in ancient history. Jewish customs are explained, the genealogy of Christ is traced to Adam, the head of the whole human family, and

* *Friend of God.* It was a common name

He is presented as the Saviour of the world. Several parables are found in this Gospel alone, as the most beautiful of all, "The Prodigal Son."

Luke also wrote the *Acts of the Apostles*, which is virtually a continuation of his Gospel.

JOHN.—The fourth Gospel is by John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." It was the latest written, and differs greatly from the other Gospels, which follow, in the main, the same order. He begins by showing that Jesus is the eternal Son of God, and he relates some miracles not mentioned by the other evangelists; but the chief feature of his Gospel is the fulness with which it describes the closing events in the life of Christ, and the way in which spiritual life is to be obtained through union with Him.

John was also the author of three Epistles and of Revelation, the concluding book of the New Testament and the latest written.

Inspiration.—To know fully the will of God, Hindus, Muhammadans, and Christians all admit that a Revelation from Him is necessary. Brahminism claimed to "stand upon the rock of Intuition," asserting that no "book-revelation" was required. *Intuition* is the striving of the human mind after a knowledge of the unseen; *Revelation* is an *unveiling* by divine power of what would otherwise be unknown. The opinions of the wisest and best men, are insufficient. They differ on many important points, and even when they agree, they want authority.

Christians believe the Bible to be *inspired*, or to contain a Divine Revelation. The word *inspiration* means a *breathing into*. It is here used to denote the influence which the Holy Spirit exerted over the authors of the different books of Scripture, de

termining what they should write, and preserving them from error. Different views have been held as to the extent of inspiration. Some think that it included the exact words; others, the general sense; others that it referred only to religious truth. All admit that there is a human element in the Scriptures, the writers being left free, to a certain extent, to follow their own style of language.

In comparing the accounts in the different Gospels, there may sometimes be apparent discrepancies. One evangelist may say that an event took place at a certain hour, while another may mention a different one. The explanation is that the one uses the Jewish, the other the Roman reckoning of time. In other cases some circumstance may be omitted, which would harmonise the whole. Half-educated opponents of Christianity are fond of bringing forward alleged contradictions; but one of the ablest sceptical journals in England makes the following admission: "It is useless to carp at small minor details. All histories contain variations, or if you like to call them, contradictions on minor points. This has been the case with every history that has been written from Herodotus to Mr. Froude."

Although the doctrine of Inspiration is very important, the truth of Christianity does not hinge upon it. "Supposing the Gospels not inspired," says Conder, "or that we had no reason to think them inspired, yet, if they give us the testimony of truthful and capable eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of these facts, they supply the required foundation of our faith."

This little volume is intended primarily for educated Hindus. All that is assumed, at present, of the Gospels is "that the writers were honest men who had good opportunities of seeing or hearing about

what they wrote, and were sufficiently intelligent to form reasonable opinions about what they saw and heard."

Manuscripts and Versions of the New Testament.—The language spoken in Palestine at the time of Christ was Aramaic, a kind of Syriac, of the same family as Hebrew, the ancient language of the Jews. The New Testament was written in Greek, which was then the most widely known language, as English is at present.

Some of the New Testament manuscripts are probably the oldest in the world. One found in a building on Mount Sinai was written in the fourth century; another, preserved in the Vatican Library at Rome, is of about the same age. Later ones are very numerous. Translations of the New Testament were made into Latin and Syriac during the second century. Portions of it were translated into Anglo-Saxon in the eighth century. The whole Bible was translated into English in the fourteenth century. The English Version now in common use was completed in 1611, during the reign of James I. A revised translation was recently issued.

The original is not divided into chapters and verses. This arrangement was adopted about three centuries ago for easy reference.

The use of italics in the Bible is peculiar. They are not employed, as in other books, to give emphasis; but they mark out words which are not represented in the original, but which are added in order to complete the sense in English.

The British and Foreign Bible Society has, directly or indirectly, published the Bible, in whole or in part, in about 300 languages.

How to be Read.—The good to be obtained from the New Testament will depend upon the way in

which it is used. Some, alas ! read only to carp or even to scoff. This is the case with some men in India who could not pass the Entrance Examination of the Universities. On the other hand, the illustrious Bacon could say, "Thy creatures have been my books, but 'Thy Scriptures much more." Sir Isaac Newton was a diligent student of the Bible. "We account the Holy Scriptures," says he, "to be the most sublime philosophy." Dr. Samuel Johnson, shortly before his death, said to a young man, "Read the Bible every day of your life." Numerous similar testimonies might be quoted. Solomon says, "A scorner seeketh wisdom and findeth it not." "The meek will God teach His way."

Nor ought the New Testament to be taken up simply from curiosity or to while away in idle hour. It should be read with a sincere desire to obtain spiritual benefit. It should be studied daily, with a reverent, teachable spirit. Say with the Psalmist, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." Psalm lxx. Any available helps should be used. Comparing one passage with another is often of great assistance. Short explanations of some words are given in the Appendix ; but Commentaries and Bible Dictionaries should be consulted, if they can be obtained. There should be earnest prayer. Say with David, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law;" "Make me to understand Thy precepts." One or two examples of prayers will be found in the Appendix. There should also be a willingness to obey the teaching of Scripture. It is of no use for the sick man to know what the proper medicine is, unless he takes it ; and in like manner it is of no use to read the New Testament, if we do not imbibe

its spirit, and carry out its precepts in our daily life. There is also the promise, "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." John vii. 17.

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE BIBLE.

Thy thoughts are here, my God,
Expressed in words divine,
The utterance of heavenly lips
In every sacred line.

More durable they stand
Than the eternal hills;
Far sweeter and more musical
Than music of earth's rills.

Thine, Thine, this book, though given
In man's poor human speech,
Telling of things unseen, unheard,
Beyond all human reach.

A thousand hammers keen,
With fiery force and strain,
Brought down on it in rage and hate,
Have struck this gem in vain.

Against this sea-swept rock
Ten thousand storms their will
Of foam and rage have wildly spent;
It lifts its calm face still.

It standeth and will stand,
Without or change or age,
The word of majesty and light,
The church's heritage.

Bonar.

IV. PALESTINE AND ITS PEOPLE.

A short account will be given of Palestine, where Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, was born.

Physical Features.—Midway between England and India, lies one of the most remarkable countries of the globe, *Palestine*—so called from the Philistines, who occupied the south-western part at an early period. Its greatest length is about 180 miles, and its average breadth about 70. The total area is about 12,000 square miles—half the size of Ceylon or Oudh. The western part, *Palestine Proper*, includes about 6,600 square miles,—nearly the same as Travancore. It never reckoned more than five millions of inhabitants, and it now contains less than one-tenth of that number. Once it was the most beautiful country on the earth; now it is a desolation, hardly able to maintain the scattered population who occupy it. Its ancient inhabitants are a byword.

The geographical appearances of the region are also remarkable. It seems shut in on all sides. Its western boundary is the Mediterranean or Great Sea, yet that sea was never covered with the shipping of the Jews. On the south-west, it is desert. On the south, a range of high hills and the barren sands of Arabia forbid all access to the wilderness of Sinai, and the waters of the Red Sea. On the east, we have the sandy plains of Arabia, stretching away to the great river, "the river Euphrates:" and, on the north, a mountain chain terminating on the snow-capped summits of Lebanon. Horses and ships (both those of the sea and those of the desert) were alike forbidden to the inhabitants of this region, and it was clearly intended that they should live alone among the nations.

And yet Palestine seems adapted to play no unimportant part in the history of our race. It is nearly in the centre of the ancient world, equally distant from the heart of Asia, Africa, and of Europe,

and on the high road between them all. One of its plains has been a battle-field of successive armies for more than 3,000 years. From this region have flowed the truths and precepts which have civilized and blessed the earth. All western nations look to it as the origin of their greatness, and Mohammed himself has extolled the religion for which it is illustrious: the religion which was taught by the lips, and embodied in the life of the Son of God. All indeed that is commendable in the teaching of the Arabian prophet is taken from those disclosures which the earlier religion of the people of this district had revealed.

Nor is it uninteresting to glance over the surface of this region, and mark its peculiarities. Here, by the sea-board, lie the beautiful plains of Philistia and Sharon; and between the two ranges of hills (the Eastern and Western Ghats, as we may call them), which run nearly parallel from north to south throughout the whole land, lies the valley of the Jordan, reaching from the sides of Lebanon to the Dead Sea. Beyond Lebanon, again, the valley stretches away still northward (under the name of Coele-Syria) to the very centre of Asia Minor. This mountain range of Lebanon, it may be noticed, rises to the height of 10,000 feet, and is covered, during most part of the year, with snow. On its sides and at its base are found most of the productions both of the tropical and of the temperate zones. Near the summit are the cedar and fir. Higher still are the lichens and moss of the polar regions. Around the centre-belt grow the oak and other hard woods of Europe, with corn and olives. Lower still is the vine; and over Damascus and Palmyra may be still seen groves of the palm and the fig. Similar districts of hill and valley cover the whole country.

Here in the north is the pasture-ground of Carmel, where the prophet Amos fed his flocks. Here near Jericho, the city of palm-trees, is perpetual summer. A careful observer, looking only at the surface of the country itself, would pronounce it the fitting residence of a hardy and prosperous race. It combines the bracing cold of Darjiling with the fruitfulness of the alluvial districts of Bengal or Gujarat.

Of the unevenness of these regions, and the consequent variety of temperature and production, we may judge from the fact that the Jordan springs from hills whose base is more than 2,000 feet above its final resting place in the Dead Sea, and the surface of that sea is nearly 3,000 feet lower than Jerusalem, though only twenty miles distant; while Jerusalem itself is so surrounded by hills, as to be an emblem of the good; for "as the mountains are round about" it, "so the Lord is about them that fear Him."*

The Inhabitants.—Palestine was at first chiefly peopled by tribes, descended from Canaan, a grandson of Noah. Hence the earliest name was the *Land of Canaan*. On account of their wickedness, the Canaanites were destroyed or driven out to make way for the Israelites, the descendants of Abraham. This was about 1450 years before Christ. The earliest hymns of the Rig-Veda were composed about the same time, probably not long after the Aryans first entered India.

For about four centuries after their settlement in Canaan, the Israelites were under officers, called Judges, raised up from time to time to deliver them from their enemies. About 1100 B. C. they

* Chiefly abridged from *Christ our Life*, by Dr. Angus.

desired a king, and Saul was appointed. He was succeeded by David, a great warrior, who so enlarged his dominions that they extended to the Euphrates. Solomon, David's son, was famed for his wisdom. Under his son, the country was divided into two kingdoms,—Judah, in the south, and Israel in the north. The kings of Israel were all bad, and God allowed them to be carried away captive by the Assyrians, 721 B. C. Some of the kings of Judah were good men, others wicked. In 588 B. C. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, took Jerusalem, and carried the people away captive. Cyrus, King of Persia, allowed the Jews to go back to their own country.

After the return from the captivity, the Jews were at times under the nations around, at times ruled by their own high priests. Pompey, the great Roman general, after annexing Syria, took Jerusalem 63 B. C., and made Palestine tributary. In 47 B. C., Julius Cæsar appointed an Edomite, named Antipater, ruler of Judea, and one of his sons, named Herod, was made King of Palestine by the Roman Senate. The first Herod was surnamed the Great on account of his victories and the magnificent buildings he erected; but he was notorious for his cruelty. The Roman Emperor Augustus said of him, "It is better to be his pig than his son."* After a long reign, Herod died a miserable death. He wished his dominions divided among his sons. To Archelaus he left Judea and Samaria; to Herod Antipas, Galilee and Perea; and to Philip, the districts to the north of Perea. Archelaus was such a tyrant, that he was deposed by the Romans, and his part of the country was

* In Greek the words for pig and son are somewhat alike.

placed under a Roman governor, subordinate to the governor of Syria. The sons of Herod occupied a relation to the Roman emperor similar to that which the Nizam, Holkar and other Indian princes hold to the Queen of England.

Religious Condition.—The Jews, after their return from Babylon, were entirely weaned from idolatry. The temple at Jerusalem was rebuilt, and the great festivals were observed as in former times.

The Council,* composed of 72 priests, scribes, and elders, of each an equal number, decided all questions; but the power of life and death was taken away from it by the Romans.

Two leading sects sprang up after the captivity. The *Pharisees*, the principal sect, were so called from a Hebrew word, meaning *separated*. They looked upon themselves as very holy, and despised others as unclean, very much like bigoted Hindus in this country. The traditions of the elders, or sayings handed down, were looked upon as of more authority than the Scriptures themselves. They paid great attention to ceremonies; they fasted often; they paid tithes on the smallest herbs, although this was not required; they made long prayers at the corner of streets to be seen of men. Jesus Christ condemned severely their pride, hypocrisy, and oppression of the poor. Still, there were some good men among them.

The *Sadducees* were the opposite of the Pharisees. The latter believed too much; the former too little. The Sadducees accepted only the five books of Moses. They denied the existence of angels or spirits; they held that the soul dies with the body, and that there is no future state. They gave them-

* Called the Sanhedrin, from the Greek *Synedrion*.

selves up to ease and pleasure, caring little for religion. They were not numerous, but the high priest in the time of Christ, belonged to them, and some of them were rich.

The *Samaritans*, between Judea and Galilee, were descendants of persons sent by the king of Assyria to people the country after he had carried captive the Israelites. They were a mixed race from various nations, but in course of time, they claimed Jewish descent. They received the five books of Moses, and built a temple for themselves on Mount Gerizim. The Jews hated the Samaritans, and their very name was a term of reproach. There are still a few of their descendants in Palestine, observing the Mosaic law.

The *Scribes* were not a sect. Printing was still unknown, and the books of Scripture had to be copied. This was done by men called *scribes*. As they thus became well acquainted with the laws of Moses, they were regarded as its teachers. In the New Testament they are sometimes called *lawyers*. Like the Pharisees, they made void the law by their traditions. They paid great attention to trifling matters, while they neglected justice and mercy. They were mostly Pharisees.

Persons from other nations who had accepted the Jewish religion were numerous. They were called *proselytes*.* “Proselytes of righteousness” were circumcised, and observed all the Mosaic law. “Proselytes of the gate” were not circumcised, but pledged themselves to give up idolatry, and to worship the true God.

Expectations of a Deliverer.—The Jews chafed greatly under Roman rule, and were earnestly

* From *pros*, towards, and *eleutho*, to come.

looking for the fulfilment of prophecy regarding the Messiah. But they took notice only of such predictions as agreed with their own desires. They expected a mere temporal king, who would take revenge on their enemies, and found a universal empire with Jerusalem as its capital. All the wealth and glory of the world were thus to fall into their hands. Only here and there was there a Jew who had higher and holier thoughts of "the consolation of Israel,"—who looked for deliverance from sin rather than from an earthly yoke.

THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

(Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine, is often used by Christian writers as a type of heaven.)

JERUSALEM the golden,
 With milk and honey blest,
 Beneath thy contemplation
 Sink heart and voice opprest;
 I know not, O I know not,
 What joys await us there;
 What radiancy of glory,
 What bliss beyond compare!

They stand, those halls of Zion,
 All jubilant with song,
 And bright with many an angel,
 And all the martyr throng;
 The Prince is ever in them,
 The daylight is serene;
 The pastures of the blessed
 Are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the throne of David;
 And there, from care released,
 The shout of them that triumph,
 The song of them that feast;
 And they who, with their Leader,
 Have conquered in the fight,
 For ever and for ever
 Are clad in robes of white,

O sweet and blessed country,
 The home of God's elect !
 O sweet and blessed country,
 That eager hearts expect !
 Jesu, in mercy bring us
 To that dear land of rest :
 Who art, with God the Father,
 And Spirit, ever blest.

Bernard of Cluny.

THE GOSPELS.

V. THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS CHRIST.

Some account will now be given of the life of Jesus Christ, with remarks about His teaching. The space available, however, is so limited, that only a few points can be noticed, and these imperfectly. The reader is earnestly recommended to study the four Gospels themselves. Some events are described and discourses given in one Gospel which are not to be found in the others. All of them should, therefore, be read.

The Trinity.—John begins his Gospel by referring to the pre-existence of Christ. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." A *word* is that by which we communicate our thoughts. The Son of God may be called "the Word," because by Him God makes known His will to men. John here declares His divinity: "the Word was God." He afterwards mentions His incarnation. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." John i. 1, 14.

Our own existence is a mystery. It is reasonable to suppose that the nature of God is far more in-

comprehensible. The Bible most emphatically asserts the Divine Unity. At the same time we learn from the Scriptures that in the Godhead there are three persons of equal power and glory, called Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This union of three in one is called the *Trinity*, though the term itself does not occur in the Bible.

There may seem to be a contradiction in saying that God is one and yet three. It may be asked, how can one be three and three one? This objection might be valid if the terms were understood in the same sense in each case. But an illustration will show that a living being may be one in one sense and three in another. Man is a unit, yet he consists of body, soul, and spirit. While the comparison is by no means parallel, and can, in no degree, assist us in comprehending the Trinity, it shows that it does not involve any contradiction.

Again, it should be understood that when Jesus Christ is called the Son of God, the meaning is not that He is a Son born in the ordinary way. The supposition were blasphemy. "It must be evident, that the language is figurative, and that that part only of the figure is used (as is always the case in using emblems) which is suitable to the occasion." The human relation of sonship is, to finite apprehension, the most expressive symbol of the connection between the two, but it does not explain it.

The Forerunner of Christ.—The Gospel of Luke describes the angel Gabriel appearing to the priest Zacharias, and telling him that he was to have a son, who was to be the messenger of the Messiah. The prophet Isaiah (700 B. C.) thus mentioned him: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord." xl. 3. Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets,

(400 B. C.), wrote, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." (iii 1.)

Herod the great had rebuilt the temple at Jerusalem in magnificent style, and services went on as in former days. The priests, descended from Aaron, the brother of Moses, were divided into 24 courses, each attending a week, some taking one duty, some another. It fell to the lot of Zacharias to burn incense. One day while doing so, the angel Gabriel appeared to him. The word *angel* means *messenger*. Angels generally mean holy spirits, employed to do God's will. *Gabriel* means *man of God*. There are also evil spirits who once were good. The chief of them is called Satan (*the enemy*) or the Devil.

The child of Zacharias was to be called *John*, meaning *the gift of God's grace*. He was to go before the Messiah, with the boldness of the prophet Elias,* or Elijah, to prepare the people for His coming. This news was so wonderful that Zacharias at first could not believe it. The angel told him that he should be dumb till these things happened.

When Zacharias came out, he could not speak to the people, but he made signs to them that he had seen a vision. When he went home, he made known to his wife Elizabeth, by signs and writing, the great blessing God had promised them.

Read Luke i. 5-25.

The Message to Mary.—In the sixth month after he appeared to Zacharias, Gabriel was sent on a like errand to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was promised in marriage to a man named Joseph. Though descended from David, the greatest of the Jewish kings, he was only

* *Elias* is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Elijah*.

a carpenter. Gabriel told Mary that she would bare a son who was to be called *JESUS, Saviour*. Though born of Mary, He was to be the Son of the Highest, and He was to reign as a king for ever. Mary asked how this could be as she was a virgin. The angel told her that the child was to be born by the power of the Holy Ghost; He was to be spotlessly pure, and the Son of God.

For reasons already mentioned, it was necessary that the Son of God should become man to save us. If, however, He had been born in the usual way, He would have inherited our sinful nature. Even infants show by their passion at times, that they enter the world with evil dispositions. Jesus was, therefore, conceived in the womb of a virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost. This is a mystery, but so even is an ordinary birth to one who thinks deeply. On hearing the explanation of Gabriel, Mary said, "Be it unto me according to thy word." After this she went to see her cousin Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias. The two good women rejoiced to meet each other, and sang praises to God. After staying with Elizabeth three months, Mary returned home.

Luke i. 26-56.

Birth of John.—In due time Elizabeth had a son. According to Jewish custom, he was to be circumcised the eighth day, and a name given to him. The neighbours and friends wished him to be called Zacharias after his father; but his mother said that he was to be named John. They objected that none of her relations was so called. On making signs to the father, he wrote, "His name is John." Immediately Zacharias was able to speak again, and he praised God.

Zacharias blessed God for raising up a "horn of salvation," according to His promise. A horn is

an emblem of strength. The phrase denotes one "mighty to save." He was to be descended from David, as the prophets foretold. John was to prepare the way of the Lord, and to show the people how their sins might be forgiven.

The parents of John probably died when he was young. He early went to the wilderness, and lived there till he appeared as the messenger of the Messiah. Luke i. 57-80.

The Message to Joseph.—Mary was engaged in marriage to Joseph, but before they came together she was found with child. Joseph, who was a good man, did not wish to put Mary to open shame; so he intended to send her away privately. While he thought on these things, an angel told him in a dream not to be afraid to take Mary, for the child was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost. He was to be called Jesus, for "He shall save His people from their sins." The prophecy of Isaiah was thus fulfilled, that a virgin should have a Son who was to be called Emmanuel, *God with us*. Isaiah vii. 14. When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel commanded. Matthew i. 18-25.

The Birth of Christ.—The prophet Micah (700 B.C.) had foretold that Christ was to born at Bethlehem of Judea; but Joseph and Mary lived at Nazareth in Galilee. The fulfilment was brought about in this way.

Herod was under Augustus Cæsar, the Roman Emperor. Augustus ordered that a census should be taken throughout the empire, probably with a view to future taxation. In Palestine every one had to go for this purpose to his own city, where the family registers were kept. Joseph went with Mary to Bethlehem, because he was descended from David, who belonged to that city. When after

several days' journey, they came to Bethlehem, they found the inn full, and had to take shelter in a stable. There Mary gave birth to her first-born son; she wrapped some clothes around Him, and laid Him in a manger. We might have expected the Son of God to be born in a palace, and laid in a cradle of gold, but it was far otherwise. He had come into the world to suffer and die to save us.

Christmas day, kept in memory of the birth of Christ, is held on the 25th December. It probably happened about that time of the year, but the exact day is uncertain. The Roman era was the building of Rome. The present reckoning among civilised nations did not come into use before the sixth century, and was then wrongly calculated. The birth of Christ took place about four years before the current era. Thus, in 1886, Jesus was born 1890 years ago. Luke ii. 1-7.

The Two Genealogies.—The Jews were very careful about keeping their family registers. The nation was divided into tribes, and each had its allotted portion of land as an inalienable possession. Registers were also required to show that the promised Messiah was of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David.

Matthew, writing mainly for the Jews, gives the descent from Abraham to Jesus (i. 1-18). Luke ascends from Jesus to Adam, as he wrote for all (iii. 23-38). The genealogies differ in some cases. One explanation is that Matthew gives the descent of Joseph, and Luke that of Mary; but the more general opinion is that Matthew gives Joseph the legal descent as heir to David's throne, and Luke his private genealogy.

The Shepherds.—On the night that Jesus was born, some shepherds were keeping watch over

their flocks, in fields near Bethlehem. Suddenly a light brighter than the sun shone around them, and they saw an angel. The shepherds were sore afraid; but the angel told them not to fear, for he brought them good tidings of great joy to all people. A Saviour was born that day in Bethlehem, who was the promised Messiah. He also told them how they would know the child. As soon as the angel had said this, the sky was seen full of angels, singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men." The shepherds then went at once to Bethlehem, where they found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe. When the shepherds made known what they had heard, all wondered. Afterwards they returned to their flocks, praising God.

The word GOSPEL, *good tidings*, comes from the angel's message to the shepherds. The good news is for *all people*. All need it, and all are welcome.

Luke ii. 8-20.

The Presentation in the Temple.—The child was named Jesus eight days after His birth. According to the law of Moses, Mary remained at home for forty days. She then went with Joseph and the child to the temple at Jerusalem to present her first-born son, and to make the usual offering. While they were there, a good old man, named Simeon, came into the temple. He was earnestly waiting for the promised Messiah, and it had been made known to him that he should not die till he had seen Him. Simeon then took Jesus up in his arms, and prayed that he might be allowed to die in peace as he had seen the Saviour. Zacharias spoke of Jesus only as a *national deliverer*. Simeon recognized in Him "a light to lighten the *Gentiles*," the name given by the Jews to all nations except

themselves. Jesus had come to be the Saviour of the whole world. But Simeon told Mary that the child would be spoken against by many, and that she would suffer as much pain as if a sword pierced through her heart.

A very aged prophetess, named Anna, lived near the temple, and was there day and night, worshipping God. While Simeon was speaking, Anna also came into the temple. When she saw Jesus, she thanked God, and spoke about Him to all who were looking for the Messiah.

Joseph and Mary then went back to Bethlehem with the child.

Luke ii. 21-38.

Wise Men from the East.—Throughout the world an expectation then prevailed that a great king was to be born in Judea. Roman historians mention it. Balaam, from the East, foretold, "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel." (Numbers, xxiv. 17.) There were other prophecies to the same effect, which would be made known by the Jews, for a time captives in Babylon. The wise men in Chaldea and Persia, called Magi, were careful observers of the stars, believing that any unusual phenomenon in the heavens was the sign of some remarkable event on earth. One night they saw a new star. This they knew meant a *king*, and they determined to follow it till they found him. They took with them some of the precious things of their country, as offerings, gold and spices, called frankincense and myrrh. The star went before them till it led them to Jerusalem.

On their arrival, they asked the people of the city, "Where is He that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him." Herod the Great was troubled when he heard of this, afraid lest the new king

should dethrone him. All the people in Jerusalem were also uneasy, lest war should break out. Herod called together the chief priests and scribes, and asked them where Christ should be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea," as Micah had foretold (Micah v. 2.) Herod then secretly called the wise men, and asked them when the star appeared. He told them to go to Bethlehem to find the child, and bring him word, that he might also worship Him. This was a false pretence; he only wished to know where the child was, to get Him killed.

After the wise men left Herod to go to Bethlehem, the star, to their great joy, again appeared, and went before them till it stood over the house where Jesus was. They went in and worshipped the child, presenting their gifts. Warned of God in a dream, the wise men did not go back to Herod, but returned to their own country another way.

We do not need to make a long journey to come to Jesus, for He is near us wherever we are. What are the best gifts to offer to Him? Our hearts—love and obedience. Matthew ii. 1-12.

The Children of Bethlehem.—When Herod knew that the wise men had gone away without telling him, he was very angry. He determined to kill Jesus, and as he did not know the house in which he was, he sent his soldiers to destroy all the male children in Bethlehem, from two years old and under. Herod was very cruel. He who had murdered three of his own children, would easily murder other children. He knew that the Jews hated him. Lest they should rejoice at his death, when very ill, he called together the chief men of the kingdom, shut them up, and gave orders that they should be killed as soon as he should die. This order was not obeyed, but it showed the man.

Bethlehem was a small town, and the number of male children, not more than two years of age, would not exceed thirty. Still, the place was filled with mourning. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, one of the great ancestors of the Jews, was buried near Bethlehem. She is represented as coming out of her tomb, and weeping over the children who were killed. The prophet Jeremy, or Jeremiah, (xxxi. 15.) originally referred to the mourning over the Jewish captivity; Matthew shows that the words might also fitly express what had now happened.

Was Jesus killed? No, His time had not yet come. When the wise men went away, an angel told Joseph in a dream to take the child and His mother to Egypt, for Herod would seek to destroy Him. Joseph got up at once, called Mary, and, with the child, went to Egypt, where they stayed till the death of Herod. This took place not long afterwards, and Joseph was then told in a dream to return to the land of Israel.

Joseph did not go back to Bethlehem, for Judea was now under Archelaus, a son of Herod, as cruel as his father. He was warned in a dream to go to Nazareth, his old home in Galilee, which was under another son of Herod, milder than his brother Archelaus.

Matthew uses the words of the prophet Hosea (xi. 1.), referring to God's calling the Israelites out of Egypt, as receiving a new fulfilment in Christ. The people of Nazareth were proverbially looked down upon. (John i. 46; vii. 52). When it is said of Christ, "He shall be called a Nazarene," the meaning is that the prophets foretold He would be despised. Matthew ii. 13-23.

Jesus in the Temple.—Among the Jews a boy was to be sent to school at six years of age, and we

may suppose that Jesus attended like other children. When twelve years old a Jewish boy began to take his place as an Israelite, and to learn some trade. The great feast of the Jews was the *Passover*, held in memory of the destroying angel *passing over* the houses of the Israelites in Egypt. Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem every year to keep it, and when Jesus was twelve years old they took Him with them. When the feast was over, they set out with their friends to go back to Nazareth. Thinking that Jesus was in the company, they went on all day without looking for Him. But at night, when they stopped to rest, they could not find Him. Joseph and Mary were troubled at this, and went back to Jerusalem to search for him. On the third day they found Him in the temple, among the wise men, hearing what they said, and asking them questions. At Nazareth there were few persons from whom Jesus could learn anything, and He would be glad of such an opportunity for acquiring knowledge. But those who heard Him were surprised at the way in which He spoke.

When He was found, Mary said, "Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? behold Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing?" Jesus answered, "How is it that ye sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" These are the first words mentioned as spoken by Christ. He was now in his Father's house, engaged in the work which His Father had given Him to do. Joseph and Mary did not understand the meaning of what He said, but He went with them to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. As Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, He also increased in favour with God and man.

Luke ii. 41-52.

THE ANGEL'S MESSAGE.

It came upon the midnight clear
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold :
"Peace on the earth, good-will to men
From heaven's all-gracious King :—
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled ;
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world :
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

O ye, beneath life's crushing load
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way,
With painful steps and slow,
Look now, for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing :
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.

For lo ! the days are hastening on,
By prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years
Shall come the time foretold,
When the new heaven and earth shall own
The Prince of Peace their King,
And the whole earth send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Sears.

VI.—THE EARLIER MINISTRY OF CHRIST.

During the next eighteen years, Jesus lived at Nazareth. It was a small city, completely encircled by hills. The air is pure and healthful ; the neigh-

bourhood is noted for the abundance and beauty of its wild flowers. Jesus was brought up amid the simple surroundings of an artizan's home. From its being said, "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark vi. 3), we may infer that He learned Joseph's trade, and wrought at it Himself till He was thirty years of age. Jesus chose the condition in which most men must ever live. He showed that labour is a pure and noble thing, while idleness is to be despised. We learn also from Luke iv. 16 that Jesus attended the synagogue regularly. During all this time He was preparing for His great work; but so quietly, that the Nazarenes saw in Him nothing more than human. "The Divine ideal of perfect holiness, in childhood, youth, and manhood, was realized during thirty years in a life of obscure privacy, mechanical toil, home affection and duty."

Since the birth of Christ, there had been several political changes. Augustus, the Roman emperor, had been succeeded by Tiberius, now in the 15th year of his reign. Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea; Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, was tetrarch* of Galilee and Perea, while his brother Philip was tetrarch of the districts to the north-east of Palestine.

John the Baptist.—When John was about thirty years of age, he began preaching in the wilderness of Judea, or the country about Jordan. He had lived for years in the desert; his dress was a cloak of camel's hair, bound with a leather girdle; his food was locusts and wild honey. John spoke with such boldness and power, that people flocked

* A *tetrarch* strictly signifies one who governs the fourth part of a province or kingdom; but here it has a wider meaning. He had the title of king.

to hear him from Jerusalem, and all the places around.

What attracted most attention, and filled every Jewish heart with joy was the message that the Messiah was at hand, and about to set up His kingdom. This was called the "kingdom of heaven," or, as in the other Gospels, the "kingdom of God." It denotes here the Gospel dispensation, the church on earth over which Christ reigns as King. John warned the people that their mere descent from Abraham was not sufficient to gain them admission into His kingdom; it was to be one of righteousness; and the Messiah would reject all who did not possess this qualification, as a farmer winnows away the chaff from the grain.

John therefore called upon the people to *repent* of their sins. True repentance means a sorrow for past conduct, producing a new life. As an outward sign of this inward change, John baptised those who received his message in the river Jordan, telling them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance—to show by their lives that they were truly sorry for their misdeeds.

The people wondered whether John himself was not the Christ; but he told them plainly that he was not. He could only baptize with water, but One, mightier far than he, would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Water cleanses the body; gold is freed from dross by means of fire. Two familiar emblems—*water* and *fire*—are employed to show the purifying influences of the Holy Ghost upon the soul. Matt. iii. 1-12. Luke iii. 1-18.

The Baptism of Jesus.—When Jesus was about thirty years of age, and had thus attained mature manhood, He laid down his carpenter's tools, and left Nazareth to enter upon His public ministry.

But baptism and temptation were necessary to fit Him completely for his work.

Jesus went from Nazareth to the Jordan to be baptized of John. Although John did not fully know yet who Jesus was, there was such a majesty about His look, that he said, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" Jesus answered, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." These words are the second recorded saying of Jesus Christ, and the first of His public ministry. The meaning is, that it was proper for Him to obey all the requirements of the law. John then baptized Him.

As Jesus came out of the water and was praying, the heavens seemed to open, and John saw the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus in the form of a dove, and lighting upon Him. The Holy Spirit came down in this form, because, among the Jews, the dove was an emblem of gentleness and purity. By resting on Jesus for a time, it was shown that He was filled with the Holy Spirit, and that He would remain with Him. As man, this was necessary to fit Jesus for His office. Then a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The baptism of Jesus is a striking manifestation of the Trinity. There is Jesus, the Son of God, baptized; the Holy Spirit descending like a dove; and the Father addressing the Son.

Matt. iii. 13-17. Mark i. 9-11. Luke iii. 21-23.

The Temptation.—Immediately after His baptism, Jesus, full of the Holy Ghost,* was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. The

* Ghost is the Saxon word for spirit.

word *tempt* has two meanings. One is to *try*. For this end the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness. The other meaning is a bad sense, to *entice to sin*. Hence the devil is called "the tempter." Satan overcame the first Adam in Paradise ; now he sought to gain a like victory over the second Adam in the wilderness.

The temptations of Satan continued for forty days, during which time Jesus ate nothing. His spirit was so occupied, that the wants of the body were not felt, or He may have been supernaturally supported for a time. At the end of the forty days, He felt hunger, and Satan made a last great effort to conquer Him.

The first temptation was to try to make Jesus *doubt* His Father's words—whether He was really the Son of God. He was asked to show it by working a miracle: "Command that these stones be made bread." Jesus answered him from Scripture, quoting Deuteronomy viii. 3. The meaning is that God can support life in other ways than by bread. Jesus would trust His heavenly Father to provide for Him.

The second temptation was to *presume* upon God's word. Satan asked Jesus to cast Himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, which overlooked a deep valley, quoting Psalm xci. 11, 12, as a promise that He should suffer no harm. Jesus again answered from Scripture, (Deut. vi. 16.) We are not needlessly to run into danger, expecting God to protect us.

The last temptation was to take Jesus to a very high mountain, and show Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of a time. Satan offered to give them all to Jesus, if He would fall down and worship him. Jesus, answered from Scripture

(Deut. vi. 13) that God alone ought to be worshipped. Satan then went away, and angels came and ministered unto Jesus, probably by bringing Him food.

Jesus Christ was tempted like as we are, though without sin, that He might feel for us when we are tempted. We learn from His example how to resist temptation,—to remember what God has said in the Scripture, and obey it.

Matt. iv. 1-11. Mark i. 12, 13. Luke iv. 1-13.

The first Disciples.—Jesus returned from the wilderness to the east side of the Jordan, where John was still preaching. When John saw Him coming, he pointed Him out, saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!" The first-born of the Israelites in Egypt were saved by the blood of a lamb sprinkled on the door-post. Christ, as the Lamb of God, delivers from a ruin far more awful than temporal destruction. In the temple a lamb was sacrificed morning and evening, as an acknowledgment of sin, and that it deserved punishment. Those who came in faith had their sins forgiven. But it was not the lamb's blood that took their sins away. The lamb was an emblem of Christ: He was the Lamb of God, appointed to be a sacrifice for sin. The Lamb was also a type of Christ, because of its gentleness. In proof that Jesus was the Christ, John told what he had seen at His baptism.

Next day, as John was standing with two of his disciples, he saw Jesus again, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." The two disciples understood from this that they should place themselves under the teaching of the new Prophet. Jesus hearing their footsteps as they followed Him, turned round, and said, "What seek ye?" They answered, "Master,

where dwellest Thou ?" Jesus said to them, "Come and see." One of the two was Andrew. The other was John, the writer of the fourth Gospel. He does not give his own name, but he describes what he saw. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, and the two disciples stayed with Jesus that night.

Andrew and John were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised Saviour. Andrew first went and told this to his brother Simon, and brought him to Jesus. When Jesus saw him He said, that instead of Simon he should be called *Cephas*, bearing the same meaning in Aramaic as *Peter* in Greek, both signifying a stone, or piece of a rock.

The next day Jesus saw a man, named Philip. He lived in Bethsaida, a town on the Sea of Galilee, to which Andrew and Peter belonged. Jesus said to Philip, "Follow me." Philip, though willing to do so, wished to bring with him a friend, called Nathanael. At first Nathanael could not believe that any one from Nazareth could be the Messiah ; but Philip said, "Come and see." After conversing with Jesus, Nathanael said, "Rabbi,* Thou art the Son of God, the King of Israel."

John i. 19-57.

The Cleansing of the Temple.—Jesus went to Jerusalem during the feast of the passover, and there first publicly assumed the character and authority of the Messiah.

The temple had several courts. The outside one, called the Court of the Gentiles, had been taken as a place for the sale of cattle used in sacrifice. The lowing of oxen, the bleating of sheep, and the noisy

* *My Master*, a title given by the Jews to great teachers.

talk of people bargaining, could be heard all day. Money-changers also had their tables there, taking foreign coins of every kind in exchange for the Jewish half-shekel* paid as temple tribute.

Jesus was displeased with the way in which the temple was dishonoured. He made a whip of small cords, and drove the sheep and oxen out of the temple; He threw down the tables of the money-changers, and told those who sold doves to take them away, saying, "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise." The disciples then remembered the words in Psalm lxxix. 9, "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up," meaning, I am full of desire for the honour of Thy house.

Christ had such a look of majesty that no resistance was offered. It was also felt that He was right. He was only asked for a miracle in proof of His authority to do these things. Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews thought that He referred to the temple in which they stood, and which had been 46 years in building; but He was Himself the temple. After His resurrection, it was seen that He had given a sign of His being not only a true Prophet, but the Messiah.

The prophecy of Malachi was thus fulfilled: "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple." iii. 1. John ii. 13-22.

The Rejection at Nazareth.—After preaching and performing miracles in different parts of the country, Jesus visited His old home at Nazareth, where His mother still resided. On the Sabbath day, as was His custom, He went into the synagogue. A synagogue was a building, somewhat

* The shekel was a Jewish coin, worth about Rs. 1½.

like a Christian church, in which the people met to worship God, to hear the Scriptures read, and sometimes to have them explained. Two passages were read from the Old Testament, one from the books of Moses, the other from the Prophets. The ruler of the synagogue asked any one qualified to read the lessons, and Jesus had probably taken His turn in doing so, although He does not seem to have given any address previously. On this occasion the book of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him. The Jewish Scriptures were written on parchment, which was rolled up. When Jesus had unrolled the book, He found the passage which had been written seven hundred years before (Isaiah lxi. 1-3). It was a prophecy of the Messiah, who was to preach to the poor, to comfort the sorrowing, and give sight to the blind. After reading, Jesus rolled up the book, gave it back, and sat down. The Jews stood when reading, but sat when teaching. The eyes of all present were fixed on Jesus, eager to hear what He was going to say.

The first words of Jesus were, "To-day this Scripture is fulfilled in your ears." He spoke with such sweetness that all were filled with wonder. But soon a change took place. They began to whisper, Is not this Joseph's son? Is not this the carpenter? How can *He* be the Messiah? Jesus said that they would expect Him to perform in Nazareth the miracles which they had heard He had done in Capernaum. He reminded them that God did not confine His blessings to the Israelites. In a time of famine, it was a widow of Sidon, in Phœnicia, that Elias, or Elijah, was sent to help (I Kings xviii. 9), and that the only leper cured by Eliseus, or Elisha, was Naaman, the Syrian. (II Kings v. 14.)

Instead of being convinced, the hearers were filled with rage. They rushed upon Jesus, and hurried Him out of the city to a precipice, from which they wished to cast Him headlong. But passing through the midst of them, He left the city in which He had been brought up, and went to Capernaum ; where afterwards He chiefly resided.

Thus, as the prophet foretold, Jesus was "despised and rejected of men." (Isaiah liii. 3.) "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." (John i. 11.) Many treat Jesus at the present day like the people of Nazareth.

Luke iv. 14-30. Mark vi. 1-6.

Calling of Disciples.—Jesus wished to have companions to be eye-witnesses of His miracles, and to listen to His teaching. Four of the eight writers of the New Testament were therefore chosen at the commencement of His ministry, and remained with Him till its close.

One day the people on the shore of the Sea of Galilee crowded around Jesus to hear Him. There were two boats standing by, but the fishermen had gone out of them. Jesus went into one of the boats, which belonged to Simon, and asked him to push it out a little from the land. He then sat down, and taught the people out of the boat.

When Jesus had done speaking, He told Simon to let down his net to catch some fish. Simon answered that they had toiled all night and taken nothing ; but he would do as Jesus told him. When they had done this, so many fish were caught that the net broke. Simon and Andrew then made signs to their partners, James and John, in the other boat, to come and help them. Both boats were so filled that they began to sink. Simon, seeing this, fell down at the feet of Jesus,

saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." He felt the greatness of Jesus, and his own unworthiness. Jesus replied, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Peter was to teach about Jesus; He was to try to catch men in the Gospel net, that they might be saved. Simon and Andrew, James and John, immediately left all to follow Jesus. Luke v. 1-11.

The Twelve Apostles.—Christ first asked a few of His disciples to give up their employments, and be with Him constantly. Afterwards He chose twelve of them to be Apostles. The word apostle means *one sent forth*. The Apostles were so called, because they were *sent forth* to preach the Gospel. They were Christ's ambassadors, and were to carry on His work after He went up to heaven.

Before choosing the Apostles, Jesus went up alone into a mountain, and spent the whole night in prayer. He was about to take an important step, and in such a case, special prayer is a duty. Early next morning He chose twelve—the same number as the tribes of Israel.

Four of the Apostles were fishermen—Peter, Andrew, James, and John. Matthew was a tax-gatherer; Philip had been called before. Bartholomew is supposed to be the same as Nathanael. Two of the disciples were named James. James, the son of Alphaeus, was called the *Less* from his short stature. Lebbeus Thaddeus, also called Judas, or Jude, was a relation of James the Less. Simon was called in Aramaic, the Cananite, and in Greek, Zelōtes. Both words mean *one zealous*. The name was given to a sect very zealous in religion. Two of the Apostles were named Judas, the Greek form of Judah. To distinguish them, one is called Judas Iscariot, from his native town

in Judea. Eleven of the Apostles belonged to Galilee, and at least five of them to Bethsaida.

Jesus sent out the Apostles to make known the Gospel; He gave them the power of working miracles; they were told not to make any provision for the way, but to trust in God; they were to be content with whatever was offered to them.

Jesus afterwards sent out seventy other disciples, two by two, to go to the cities which He was about to visit Himself.

Christ did not choose rich men, learned men or great men, to be His Apostles; but simple men, belonging to the common people. Christianity did not make way through the wealth, eloquence, or rank of those by whom it was first proclaimed. It spread through the power of God, and not of man.

Jesus educated the Apostles "with the most affectionate patience, bearing with their vulgar hopes, and their clumsy misunderstandings of His meaning. The most important part of their training was the silent and constant influence of His character on theirs. He drew them to Himself, and stamped His own image on them."*

A CHRISTIAN'S ADDRESS TO CHRIST.

My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in Thy Word;
But in Thy Life the law appears
Drawn out in living characters

Such was Thy truth, and such Thy zeal,
Such pleasure in Thy Father's will,
Such love, and meekness so divine,
I would transcribe, and make them mine.

* *Stalker's Life of Christ.*

Cold mountains and the midnight air,
Witnessed the fervour of Thy prayer;
The desert Thy temptations knew,
Thy conflict, and Thy victory too.

Be Thou my pattern ! make me bear
More of Thy gracious image here;
Then God, the Judge, shall own my name
Among the followers of the Lamb.

Watts.

VII. THE TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST.

One of the chief objects which Jesus had in view in coming to this world was to teach men. Throughout the Gospels, He is frequently said to "teach;" He is often mentioned as "Master," or Teacher; His followers are called "disciples," or learners. So much of his time was devoted to instruction and such was its excellence, that He has been called the "Great Teacher."

Jesus taught in different ways. The most effectual kind of teaching is by example. One reason why Jesus was born as a man was, that we might the more easily imitate Him. From childhood till His ascension, He furnished us with the best model for our conduct. The proud may learn from Him humility; the poor may learn contentment; the indolent may learn activity; and so with every other virtue.

Jesus also taught by His miracles. They proved Him to be the Son of God; they showed us that we ought, as far as lies in our power, to help all in distress; and they unfold, in some cases, important spiritual lessons.

But besides these ways of teaching, Jesus gave direct instruction. A few of its leading features may be briefly noticed.

The Form of Instruction.—It may first be pointed out *what is was not*. He did not expound any system of doctrine, as in a treatise on theology. He largely avoided technical terms. "He spoke in the language of common life, and concentrated His preaching on a few burning points that touched the heart, the conscience, and the time."

Some of Christ's teaching consists of *short sayings*. "Every one contains the greatest possible amount of truth in the smallest possible compass, expressed in language so concise and pointed as to stick in the memory like an arrow."

Another characteristic of Christ's teaching was the use of *emblems*. "It was full of figures of speech. He thought in images. He had ever been a loving and accurate observer of nature around Him—of the colours of the flowers, the ways of the birds, the growth of the trees, the changes of the seasons, and an equal observer of the ways of men in all parts of life—in religion, in business, in the home. His preaching was alive with such references, and therefore full of colour, movement, and changing form."*

From familiar illustrations, He drew arguments of resistless force. To convince His disciples that the Heavenly Father will take care of all who put their trust in Him, He says, "Behold the birds of the air! They are not God's children; and yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Consider the lilies of the field. They are not God's children, and yet your Heavenly Father clotheth them. Ye are God's children; most certainly then will your Heavenly Father feed and clothe you." Another example may be given. "What man is there of you, who,

* Stalker's *Life of Christ*.

if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone ? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good gifts to them that ask Him ?”

The use of *parables* was a main feature in Christ's teaching. About one-third of all His sayings which have been preserved to us, consists of parables. A parable has been defined as an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. There is a deep foundation for the parabolic method. “All things,” says an old Jewish writer, “are double, the one against the other.” A strong correspondence exists between things spiritual and things natural.* It has been said that the Bible is in two volumes, the volume of Scripture and the volume of Nature.

Again, parables are one of the most effective means for fixing truth in the memory. Stories are far more easily remembered than abstract explanations. “Jesus took the commonest objects and incidents around Him, and made them the means of conveying to the world immortal truth. Even the simplest could delight in such pictures, and carry away as a life-long possession the expression at least of the ideas, though it might require the thought of centuries to pierce their crystalline depths. There never was speaking so simple, yet so profound ; so pictorial, yet so absolutely true.”

Two peculiarities of the parables need to be understood. “Most of them,” says Angus, “exhibit but partial views of truth, some phase or corner, and

* This is strikingly brought out in a recent work, Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*.

not the whole; we must therefore compare them; and some of them are prophetic."

A list of the parables of Jesus Christ is given in the Appendix.

The Manner of Instruction.—Here again it may first be shown *what it was not*. One remark made by those who heard Jesus was, that He did not teach "as the scribes." The scribes were the expounders of the law. Instead of keeping to the Scriptures themselves, they gave the opinions of commentators, and made void by traditions some of their plainest precepts. "They were for ever vexing the conscience of men by binding on their shoulders heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, discriminating between swearing by the temple and the gold of the temple, tithing mint and rue and anise and cummin and all manner of herbs, but passing over the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, faith, and the love of God, straining out gnats, but swallowing camels." Not so did Jesus teach. He did not dwell upon ceremonies and outward observances, but went to the heart.

Jesus, it is said, "*taught with authority.*" The scribes were afraid to make any statement unless it were backed up by the support of some great name. Jesus was an unlettered man, who had not passed through the schools of Jerusalem, yet He boldly overturned the misinterpretations of centuries. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time But I say unto you." Look at His other claims: "I am the light of the world;" "I am the way, the truth, and the life." From first to last it is a King who speaks. There was such a majesty about His look, that it was the natural impulse of those who approached Him to fall at His feet and worship. The officers sent to seize

Him dare not touch Him, saying, "Never man spake like this man."

Graciousness was another marked feature in the teaching of Christ. The scribes despised the common people about as much as the Brahmins do the Sudras. While they flattered the rich, they said of the masses, "This people which knoweth not the law is cursed." Jesus treated the humblest with love and respect. "Children gathered fearlessly around Him, and ran at His call into His arms. Publicans and sinners drew near to Him. Despised and miserable outcasts felt that He alone of all men would not spurn them or shrink from them. The poor, the broken-hearted, the guilty felt drawn by the irresistible charm of love, truth, and sympathy, when He bade them come unto Him, that they might find rest to their souls."*

A few examples of Christ's teaching will be noticed.

Conversation with Nicodemus.—The first recorded discourse of Christ is that with Nicodemus. His cleansing of the temple and miracles led many to regard Him as a prophet, and among this number was Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and a member of the great Council. Unlike the Pharisees, however, Nicodemus was humble, and willing to be taught. He came to Jesus by night to inquire about that kingdom of heaven which was declared to be at hand.

Nicodemus acknowledged that Jesus was a teacher come from God; but he, like the rest of his countrymen, expected a temporal deliverer, and thought that as a Jew he belonged to the coming kingdom. Jesus saw into his heart. He told Nicodemus that

* Redford's *Outlines of Life of Christ*.

except a man, whether Jew or Gentile, be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. As Nicodemus at first did not understand this, Jesus gave him some further explanations. By being born again, a change of heart was meant. By nature, it is sinful; it must be renewed. The body is cleansed by washing it with water; the heart is purified by the Holy Spirit. Of this inward change, baptism is an outward sign. How it is effected we do not know, any more than we can tell where the wind comes from, and whither it goes.

Nicodemus, though one of the chief teachers among the Jews, still did not understand what Jesus said, and asked how these things could be? Jesus then told him more about the nature of the coming kingdom. Nicodemus expected that the Messiah would be exalted on a glorious throne; Jesus told him that the Son of man was to be lifted up, but it was to be as the brazen serpent was lifted up by Moses in the wilderness. Jesus must be lifted up on the cross and die, that perishing sinners who look to Him may be saved. God showed His great love to men in giving up His only begotten Son on their account. Belief in the Son was required for everlasting life; the rejection of Him would lead to condemnation.

The faith of Nicodemus gradually became stronger, and at last he was neither ashamed nor afraid of confessing himself a follower of Jesus.

Brahmans are said to be "twice-born" when invested with the cord. But this does not produce any change in their character. The mouth which spoke lies and filthy words before does not become truthful and pure. Before we can enter heaven, our polluted hearts must be cleansed, and this can be done only by the Holy Spirit. John iii. 1-21.

The Sermon on the Mount.—Great numbers had collected to hear Jesus. While they were seated around Him on the grass, He opened His mouth and delivered the famous discourse, known as the "Sermon on the Mount." It is given in Matthew v, vi, vii, which should be carefully read. The following summary is from Farrar's *Life of Christ*, slightly abridged:—

"The sermon began with the word 'blessed,' and with an octave of beatitudes. But it was a *new* revelation of beatitude. The people were expecting a Messiah who should break the yoke off their necks—a king clothed in earthly splendour, and manifested in the pomp of victory and vengeance. But Christ reveals to them another King, another happiness—the riches of poverty, the royalty of meekness, the high beatitude of sorrow and persecution. And this new Law, which should not only command but also aid, was to be set forth in beneficent manifestation—atonce as salt to preserve the world from corruption, and as a light to guide it in darkness. And then follows a comparison of the new Law of mercy with the old Law of threatening; the old was transitory, this permanent; the old was a type and shadow, the new a fulfilment and completion; the old demanded obedience in outward action, the new was to permeate the thoughts; the old contained the rule of conduct, the new the secret of obedience. The command, 'Thou shalt not murder,' was henceforth extended to angry words and feelings of hatred. The germ of adultery was shown to be involved in a lascivious look. The prohibition of perjury was extended to every vain and unnecessary oath. The law of equivalent revenge was superseded by a law of absolute self-abnegation. The love due to our neighbour

was extended also to our enemies. Henceforth the children of the kingdom were to aim at nothing less than this—namely, to be *perfect*, as their Father in heaven is perfect.

“And the new life which was to issue from this new Law was to be contrasted in all respects with that routine of exaggerated scruples and Pharasaic formalism which had hitherto been regarded as the highest type of religious conversation. Alms were to be given, not with noisy ostentation, but in modest secrecy. Prayers were to be uttered, not with hypocritic publicity, but in holy solitude. Fasting was to be exercised, not as a belauded virtue, but as a private self-denial, and all these acts of devotion were to be offered with sole reference to the love of God, in a simplicity which sought no earthly reward, but which stored up for itself a heavenly and incorruptible treasure. And the service to be sincere must be entire and undistracted. The cares and the anxieties of life were not to divert its earnestness or to trouble its repose. The God to whom it was directed was a Father also, and He who ever feeds the fowls of the air, which neither sow nor reap, and clothes in their more than regal loveliness the flowers of the field, would not fail to clothe and feed, and that without any need for their own toilsome anxiety, the children who seek His righteousness as their first desire.

“And what should be the basis of such service? The self-examination which issues in a gentleness which will not condemn, in a charity that cannot believe, in an ignorance that will not know, the sins of others; the reserve which will not waste or degrade things holy; the faith which seeks for strength from above, and knows that, seeking

rightly, it shall obtain; the self-denial which, in the desire to increase God's glory and man's happiness, sees the sole guide of its actions towards all the world.

"The gate was strait, the path narrow, but it led to life; by the lives and actions of those who professed to live by it, and point it out, they were to judge whether their doctrine was true or false; without this neither words of orthodoxy would avail, nor works of power.

"Lastly, He warned them that he who heard these sayings and did them was like a wise man who built a house with foundations dug deeply into the living rock, whose house, because it was founded upon a rock, stood unshaken amid the vehement beating of storm and surge; but he who heard and did them not was likened unto a foolish man that built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came; and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall thereof."

The Parable of the Prodigal.—This has been called the "pearl of parables." It and two others, given in Luke xv., were spoken, because the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." They would no more have done this than a Brahman would sit down at table with a Sudra. The following explanation of one of the parables is abridged from *Geikie's Life of Christ* :—

"A certain man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father,—'Father, give me the portion of the property that falls to me.' The father, on this, divided between the two all his living, retaining, however, in his hands till his own death, the larger share of the elder son.

"Before long, the younger son began to dislike the restraint of his father's house, and gathering all together set off for a distant country, and there lived in such riot, that his whole means were very soon exhausted. But, now, when he had spent his all, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in distress. At last it went so hard with him, that he was glad to ask one of the citizens to give him some employment to get bread. He was, thereupon, sent into the man's fields, to be his swineherd, a sadly shameful occupation for a Jew! Yet, after all, he did not as much as get the food for which he had bargained, for neither his master nor any one else heeded him, and he was left to starve. He even longed to fill himself with the pods of the carob-tree, mostly given to swine, but no one gave him even these.

"In his loneliness and sore trouble, he began to reflect, 'How many hired servants of my father,' said he to himself, 'have more bread than they can eat, while I, his son, am dying here of want. I will arise, and go back to my father, and will confess my guilt and unworthiness, and tell him how deeply I feel that I have sinned against heaven and done great wrong towards him. I will say that I am no longer worthy to be called his son, and will ask him to treat me like one of his hired labourers, and tell him that I will gladly work with them for my daily bread, so that he receive me again.'

"He had no sooner resolved to do this, than he rose to return to his father's house. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and knew him, and ran out to meet him, full of loving compassion, and fell on his neck and kissed him tenderly. And the son said to him, 'I have sinned against God and against thee, and am not worthy

that thou shouldest any longer call me thy son.' He could not say what he intended besides, when he saw how fondly his father bent over him, notwithstanding his sins and folly. Nor was more needed; for his father called out to his servants, "Bring me quickly the best robe, and put it on him instead of his rags; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it. We shall have a feast to-day and be merry, for my son, lost and dead, as I thought in a strange land, is once more at home; dead by his sins, he is alive again by repentance; a lost wanderer, he has returned to the fold."

Space does not permit the second part of the parable to be given. It is intended to show "that the Eternal Father looks with unspeakably greater favour on the penitent humility of 'the sinner,' with its earnest of gratitude and love, than on cold self-righteous correctness in which the heart has no place."

We have all wandered away from our Heavenly Father and been disobedient children. Each should return with the humble confession, "Father, I have sinned, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son." Luke xv.

The Vine and its Branches.—This is the last parable of Jesus Christ. It was spoken to His disciples the night before His death.

The vine is considered the noblest of fruit trees. It does not grow high, but when laden with large bunches of delicious grapes, it is a very pleasing sight. The vine requires careful cultivation. It may bear only leaves or the fruit may be small and poor. A skilful husbandman, or vine-dresser, soon produces a change. Branches which will not bear fruit are cut off. Such wither, and when dry, they

are cast into the fire. Branches which bear fruit are pruned, so that the strength of the plant may not be wasted on leaves. They are also freed from moss, insects, or any thing else that hinders their growth. The vine-dresser seeks to have as large a crop as possible.

The vine represents Jesus Christ ; His followers are the branches. Jesus calls Himself the " true " vine. The Jewish Church was compared to a vine, but Jesus was one far more excellent. God is the owner of the vineyard, and the dresser of the vine.

The branches denote all who call themselves Christians. The fruitless branch means a mere Christian in name, who does not bear the fruits of righteousness. There are many such ; indeed, they are far more numerous than the fruit-bearing branches. Their end is sad. If nothing else does so, death cuts off their seeming union, and they are cast out as useless.

On the other hand, the vine-dresser takes great pains with the fruit-bearing branches. This denotes the means which God uses that Christians may bear more abundantly the fruits of the Spirit, " Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Sometimes affliction is employed. Trouble may befall them ; comforts may be taken away. Their hearts may be set too much upon the world, and God may disappoint them, that they may seek for higher things. But it is all to do them good in the end. The pruning knife is used only in this world ; there is an eternity of unmingled joy beyond.

A mere profession of Christianity is not enough. There is the important question, Is the branch fruitless or fruit-bearing ? If the latter, the desire should be to glorify God by being " rich in good

works." How is this result to be obtained? By abiding in Christ—by drawing strength from Him "Without Me ye can do nothing." John xv. 1-8.

THE TEACHING OF JESUS.

How sweetly flowed the Gospel's sound
From lips of gentleness and grace,
When listening thousands gathered round,
And joy and reverence filled the place!

From heaven He came, of heaven He spoke,
To heaven He led His followers' way;
Dark clouds of gloomy night He broke,
Unveiling an immortal day.

Come, wanderers, to My Father's home,
Come, all ye weary ones, and rest;—
Yes! gracious Saviour, we will come,
Obey Thee, love Thee, and be blest.

Decay, these tenements of dust;
Pillars of earthly pride, decay!
A nobler mansion waits the just,
And Jesus has prepared the way.

VIII. THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

A miracle is a work out of the usual order of things, produced by the agency of God, in connection with the word of one who claims to be His representative. It is sometimes said to be a violation of what are popularly called the "laws of nature." But a "law" can be the cause of nothing. As Sir John Herschell remarks, "The use of the word in this connection has relation to us as understanding, rather than to the universe as obeying, certain rules." The law of gravitation does not make any body fall to the earth; it is only the name given to what has been observed. When a

boy throws a stone up into the air, he does not violate the law of gravitation, but he counteracts it by another force. In like manner, a miracle does not violate nature ; but a new force comes in at the moment to produce a supernatural effect.*

One great purpose of miracles is to afford proof of a revelation. "If it was the will of God," says, Mozley, "to give a revelation, there are plain and obvious reasons for asserting that miracles are necessary as the guarantee and voucher for that revelation. A revelation is, properly speaking, such only by virtue of telling us something which we could not know without it. But how do we know that that communication of what is undiscoverable by human reason, is true? Our reason cannot prove the truth of it, for it is by the very supposition beyond our reason. There must be, then, some note or sign to certify to it, and distinguish it as a true communication from God, which note can be nothing else than a miracle."

Nicodemus justly said to Christ, "We know that Thou art a Teacher come from God ; for no man can do these miracles which Thou doest, except God be with Him." To these Jesus Christ appealed as decisive evidence of the divinity of His mission : "The works which my Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."

Atheists look upon miracles as impossible, but persons who acknowledge the existence and active agency of God must allow that He can interpose where necessary. Locke, a distinguished English philosopher, says, "Though the common experience and ordering course of things have justly a mighty

* Taylor's *Gospel Miracles*.

influence on the minds of men to make them give or refuse credit to anything proposed to their belief, yet there is one case wherein the strangeness of the fact lessens not the assent to a fair testimony given of it. For when such supernatural events are suitable to ends aimed at by nature, then, under such circumstances, they may be fitter to procure belief by how much the more they are beyond or contrary to observation. This is the proper case of miracles, which, well attested, do not only find credit themselves, but give it to other truths which need confirmation."

Besides a sufficient reason for their occurrence, miracles should be supported by credible testimony. Were they done in public? Were they acts of which men's senses could judge? Have we the evidence of eye-witnesses? Had these anything to gain by deceit or anything to lose by telling the truth?

All the required conditions are fulfilled in the case of Christ's miracles. Paley thus expresses it: "There is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the Christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motive, to new rules of conduct."

Whately points out an important distinction between Christianity and other religions: "Almost all religions have some miraculous pretensions connected with them; that is, miracles are recorded to have been wrought in support of some Pagan religion among people who *already* believed it. But you will not find that any religion, except Christianity,

was ever introduced, and introduced among enemies,—by miraculous pretensions. Christianity is the only faith that ever was FOUNDED on an appeal to the evidence of miracles.”

“The difficulty of believing the miracles recorded in the New Testament is much less than the opposite difficulty of believing that the Christian religion was established without miracles. That a Jewish peasant should overthrow the religion of the civilized world without the aid of any miracles, is far more miraculous,—at least more incredible,—than anything that the New Testament relates ; and it will appear still more incredible, if you remember that this wonderful change was brought about by *means of an appeal to miracles.*”

The miracles of Jesus consisted chiefly of three classes—*miracles on man, miracles on nature, and miracles on the spirit-world.* The first include healing the sick, raising the dead, &c.; the second, multiplying the loaves, stilling the tempest, &c.; the third, casting out evil spirits. To these may be added His own transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension.

“The miracles of Christ,” says Stalker,* “were symbols of His spiritual and saving work. . . When He healed bodily blindness, it was a type of the healing of the inner eye ; when He raised the dead, He meant to suggest that He was the Resurrection and the Life in the spiritual world as well ; when He cleansed the leper, His triumph spoke of another over the leprosy of sin ; when He multiplied the loaves, He followed the miracles with a discourse on the bread of life ; when He stilled the storm, it was an assurance that He could speak peace to the troubled conscience.”

* *Life of Christ.*

There is marked distinction between the miracles of Christ and those of His disciples. *Theirs* were wrought in *His* name; *His* were wrought in *His own*. He had the power in Himself.

A few of Christ's miracles may be noticed as examples.

The First Miracle.—The first four disciples of Jesus were Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael. Jesus took them with Him to Cana, a small town near Nazareth, where a marriage was to be celebrated. The mother of Jesus was there, and from the way in which she spoke to the servants, it was probably the wedding of one of her relatives. Mary saw that the wine was running short, and said to Jesus, "They have no wine." Jesus had not yet wrought any miracle, but Mary remembered His wonderful birth. Jesus replied, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." The word translated "woman" is respectful and kind, but Jesus does not say "Mother." He intimated that the obedience which He owed to Mary as a son did not extend to anything connected with His public ministry. He gave Mary to understand that He would do something, but at His own time. Mary said to the servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

The Jews were very particular about purifying themselves by washing. There were six large water-pots of stone* for the use of the guests. Jesus told the servants to fill the water-pots with water, and they filled them to the brim. Then He said to them, "Draw out now and bear unto the governor of the feast." It was no longer water, the power of Jesus

* They were said to contain two or three firkins apiece. *Firkin* means the fourth part of a barrel—about as much as two large pots.

had in a moment changed it into wine. The governor of the feast did not know what had been done, but he was much pleased with the wine, because it was so good.

Jesus thus showed His glory, and His disciples believed on Him.

One or two remarks may be made about this miracle. Asceticism is not a part of true religion. A *sannyasi* who starves himself, who sits between blazing fires, or rolls along the ground, is not a whit the better for such austerities. On suitable occasions, Jesus took part in the innocent pleasures of life. He attended a marriage feast, and even provided wine when it was wanted. It should be remembered, however, that the wine was the pure juice of the grape; it was not mixed with brandy, as is the case now with most wines. The wine of Judea was light, and used with food.

There may, however, be times when it is our duty to abstain from lawful enjoyments. The apostle Paul says, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." (I Corinthians viii. 13.) In like manner, to check drunkenness, it may, under certain circumstances, be advisable to give up the use even of the mildest wine. There are great numbers of Christians belonging to Total Abstinence and Temperance Societies, who follow this course. John ii- 1-11.

A Leper Healed.—Leprosy is a dreadful disease. As it spreads over the body, it seems to eat into the flesh; the hands and feet rot and drop off. In some of its forms there is no cure for it, and the sufferer knows that he must get worse and worse.

To prevent the disease from spreading, when any one among the Jews had leprosy, he was not allowed to remain in his own house; he was obliged

to go away and live with others, who were lepers too. He had to go about with his clothes torn (as a sign of mourning), with his head bare, and with his face half-covered. If any one came near him, he must call out, "Unclean! unclean!" Then the people would start back, afraid of touching the miserable object.

There was a poor leper who had heard of Jesus, and of the wonderful things He had done; how He had made the blind to see, the lame to walk, and healed those who had been at the point of death. The thought came into his mind, "Perhaps Jesus will cure me too." So he determined to go to Him, and ask to be healed.

The people made way for the leper, afraid of being touched by him. At last he came to where Jesus was, and threw himself down at His feet. "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean," he cried with great earnestness. The leper knew that Jesus was *able* to cure him; but he did not feel sure that He was *willing* to do so.

Jesus, moved with pity for the poor leper whom every body shunned, put forth His own holy hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be thou clean." In a moment the disease was gone, and the man was in perfect health. Jesus charged him not to tell any one, but to go and show himself to the priest, and offer what was commanded.*

"Leprosy is a type of sin. Sin makes us unclean in the sight of God; and till it is taken away, He cannot receive us into heaven. Who can cleanse the leprosy of sin? Only the Lord Jesus Christ. He is able and willing to say, "I will, be thou

* Chiefly from Mrs. Morton's *Story of Jesus*. Further use has been made of the same work.

clean," to all who come to Him in faith and humility."

Matt. viii. 2-4. Mark i. 40-45. Luke v. 12-16.

Five Thousand Fed—The twelve apostles had been sent out two by two to preach. On their return they told Jesus what they had done and taught. There were so many people about, that they had no leisure even to eat. Jesus said, "Come into a desert place, and rest awhile." They went into a boat, and crossed over to the other side of the lake; but when they got to the place, a great crowd had already begun to collect. Some had followed Jesus in boats across the water, but many more had gone round by the shore.

Jesus had pity on the multitude, because they were like sheep that had no shepherd to take care of them. He therefore taught them many things, and healed all those who were sick.

In the evening, the apostles said to Jesus that it was a desert place, where there was nothing to eat, and it was getting late. They asked Him to send the people away, that they might go into the towns around, and buy themselves food. Jesus said, "They need not depart; give ye them to eat." The apostles asked if they should buy two hundred pennyworth* of bread for them? Even if they did this, there would not be enough to give each one a little. Jesus told them to see how many loaves they had. Andrew said, "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?" Jesus said, "Bring them to me." The disciples were then told to make the people sit down in rows of fifty upon the soft green grass.

* About Rs. 80.

Jesus took the loaves and fishes, and looking up to heaven, He gave thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples to set before the multitude. In the same manner He divided the fishes. The food went on increasing, till all the people had eaten and were filled. When they had quite finished, Jesus said, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." In this way they filled twelve baskets full. About five thousand men had eaten, besides women and children. When they had seen the miracle they said, "This is of a truth that prophet which should come into the world."

What Jesus did for the bodies of these men, is an illustration of what He can do for our souls. He says, "I am the Bread of Life." He can keep the soul from perishing, as bread can keep the body from dying of hunger.

Matt. xiv. 13-23. Mark vi. 30-46. Luke ix. 10-17. John vi. 1-15.

Christ walks on the Sea.—After Jesus had fed the five thousand men, they wished to proclaim Him King of the Jews. His own disciples also shared in the feelings of the crowd.

First of all, Jesus sent the disciples away. He constrained them to go into their boat again, and cross over to the other side of the lake. Afterwards He sent away the multitude. When all had dispersed, Jesus went up a mountain that was near, to spend the night in prayer alone with His Father.

It was a wild and stormy night. The disciples had got into the boat and were trying to cross the lake; but a stormy wind was blowing against them, and, though they toiled at the oars, they made little progress. The boat was tossed with the waves, while Jesus was not with them to quiet their fears. When the disciples were in the middle of the lake, about

four o'clock in the morning,* they saw dimly, through the darkness, a figure walking on the sea. They were dreadfully frightened—much more frightened at the figure than at the howling wind and tossing waves. They thought that it was a spirit, and they cried out for fear. Jesus quickly said, "It is I; be not afraid."

How glad the disciples were to hear again the voice of their Master! Peter, in his joy, could scarcely wait till Jesus came into the boat, so he called out, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water." Jesus said, "Come." Peter climbed over the side of the boat, and walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he heard the noise of the wind and saw the great waves, he was afraid. Beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, saying, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

The disciples willingly received Jesus into the boat. Two more miracles followed. The wind at once ceased, and instead of being in the midst of the lake, the disciples were at the landing-place where they wished to be. Then those who were in the boat worshipped Jesus, saying, "Of a truth Thou art the Son of God."

The disciples thought that it was a spirit they saw, for a man could not walk on the water. But Jesus had made the sea, and He could do with it what He pleased. Jesus still takes care of His people as He did of His disciples on the stormy lake. They may trust in Him and not feel afraid. Matt. xiv. 24-36. Mark vi. 47-56. John vi. 16-21.

* During the "fourth watch," which was from 3 to 6 in the morning.

The Transfiguration.—The disciples had the Jewish idea that the Messiah would set up His kingdom in Jerusalem, and reign over the whole earth. Instead of that, Jesus told them that He would be rejected by the chief priests, be killed, and be raised again the third day. About a week after, to strengthen the faith of His disciples and prepare them for what they had to endure, Jesus showed three of them a little of the glory which He had, not as king of the Jews, but as King of heaven.

One evening Jesus took Peter, James, and John to the top of a high mountain to pray. It was probably one of the lower peaks of the snowy Hermon. Weary with their long climb, when night came on, the disciples lay down on the ground, and were soon fast asleep. While they were sleeping, Jesus was praying; and as He prayed, He was transfigured, or a most wonderful change passed over Him. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became bright and glistening, white as the light itself.

Two men appeared in glory, and talked with Jesus. One of them was Moses, the great leader of the Jews, who had lived 1450 years before; the other was Elias, or Elijah, the prophet, who, 900 years before, had been taken up into heaven in a whirlwind, with chariot and horses of fire. What were they talking about? Not of Jesus triumphing over His enemies, but of His death. Moses and Elijah had come in glory to speak about that to which they owed all their happiness.

The dazzling brightness awoke the disciples, and they heard what was said. Peter proposed to make three booths, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and the other for Elias; but he was so afraid that he did

not know what he was saying. Immediately a bright cloud came and overshadowed them, and they feared as they entered the cloud. Then the voice of God the Father came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him." The disciples, greatly frightened, fell on their faces on the earth. Jesus then came and touched them, saying, "Arise, and be not afraid." When they looked up, they saw Jesus only. They were not to tell any one about this, till Jesus had risen from the dead.

The apostle John, one of the three on the mountain, afterwards wrote, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him."* The true followers of Jesus will, in another world, partake somewhat of His spotless purity and glory.

Matt. xvii. 1-13. Mark ix. 2-13. Luke ix. 28-36.

Lazarus Raised.—Bethany was a village on the east slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem. A family lived there, consisting of Lazarus and his two sisters, Martha and Mary. They were good people, and Jesus loved them all. After teaching during the day in Jerusalem, Jesus would come out in the evening to Bethany, with His disciples, to the house of Lazarus.

Once when Jesus was preaching beyond Jordan, a message came from the sisters, "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." But Jesus did not go at once to heal Lazarus. He remained two days longer in the same place. He wished to make them trust in Him more, by showing them what He could do. Lazarus got worse and worse, till at

* I John iii. 2.

last he died. His sisters wept bitterly when he was taken to the grave.

When Jesus drew near Bethany, some one told Martha that He was coming, and she ran quickly to meet Him ; but Mary sat still in the house. Martha said to Jesus, " Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Jesus said to her, " Thy brother shall rise again." Martha answered, " I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." This was not what Jesus meant, so He told her that He was Himself the resurrection and the life, and that He could give life to those that were dead. On asking her if she believed this, Martha answered, " Yes, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God."

Martha then went home and called her sister quietly to come to Jesus. When Mary saw Jesus, she fell down at His feet, and said like Martha, " Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her crying, and her friends lamenting around her, He also wept.

At last they came to the rocky tomb, with a great stone covering the entrance. It was four days since the dead body had been laid there. Jesus said, " Take away the stone." Martha objected that it was too late, but the stone was taken away. Jesus then looked up to heaven and spoke aloud to His Father, that the people might know Him to be the Son of God. Then He cried with a loud voice, " Lazarus, come forth."

Out of the darkness inside the tomb, then came forth a figure, wrapped up in linen, his face bound with a napkin, so that he moved with difficulty. Jesus said, " Loose him, and let him go." In another moment, Martha and Mary looked again upon the face of their dear brother Lazarus, restored to

perfect health. With what joy must they have returned home together !

The raising of Lazarus is an emblem of what Jesus can do for our souls. By nature we are dead in trespasses and in sin ; we are tied and bound with the chain of our evil desires. Jesus can give us spiritual life, and free us from our besetting lusts. The same voice which summoned Lazarus from his death sleep, will, at the last day, bid all men come to judgment, "some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt."

John xi. 1-54.

Angus gives the following summary of the miracles : " Nine of the miracles recorded in the Gospels were wrought in *nature*. The water He made wine ; the tempest He stilled ; the sea He made as solid earth, and walked on it ; twice He multiplied the bread, till now five thousand, and then four thousand were filled ; twice He found in the miraculous draughts of fishes emblems of the work and progress of His Kingdom ! once the fish supplied Him, through Peter, with proof of His Sonship ; and once the barren fig-tree was blasted and withered as an emblem of the fate of the city near which it stood.

" The remainder of His miracles were all wrought in a nobler field. Twice He healed persons afflicted with leprosy ; four times He opened the eyes of the blind ; thrice He cast out devils ; thrice He raised the dead ; and many times besides He healed all manner of disease. These are His *recorded* miracles ; many others of the same kind He did in all parts of Judea, 'which are not written' in these books.

" All these miracles illustrate the blessings Christ came to introduce ; all, the necessity and power of

faith; and each miracle has, besides, lessons of its own."^{*}

Thine arm, O Lord, in days of old,
Was strong to heal and save;
It triumphed o'er disease and death.
O'er darkness and the grave;
To Thee they went, the blind, the dumb,
The palsied and the lame,
The leper with his tainted life,
The sick with fevered frame.

And lo! Thy touch brought life and health,
Gave speech and strength and sight;
And youth renewed, and frenzy calmed,
Owned Thee, the Lord of light;
And now, O Lord, be near to bless,
Almighty as of yore,
In crowded street, by restless couch,
As by Gennesaret's shore.

Be Thou our great Deliverer still,
Thou Lord of life and death;
Restore and quicken, soothe and bless,
With Thine almighty breath;
To hands that work and eyes that see
Give wisdom's heavenly lore,
That whole and sick, and weak and strong,
May praise Thee evermore.

Plumptre.

IX.—THE DAILY LIFE OF CHRIST.

The following extract from Geikie's interesting *Life of Christ* gives some idea of the daily life of the Saviour during His public ministry.

It is the great characteristic of Jesus that He elevated the common details of life to the loftiest uses, and ennobled even the familiar and simple.

* Christ our Life, p. 183.

In His company, the evening meal, when not forgotten in the press of overwhelming labours, was an opportunity always gladly embraced for informal instruction, not only to the twelve, but to the many strangers whom the easy manners of the East permitted to gather in the apartment. After evening devotions, the family group invited the familiar and unconstrained exchange of thought, in which Jesus so much delighted. As the Father and Head of the circle, He would, doubtless, use the form of blessing hallowed by the custom of His nation, opening the meal by the bread and wine passed round to be tasted by each, after acknowledgment of the bounty of God in His gifts. Then would follow a word to all, in turn: the story of the day and each one's share in it, would be reviewed with tender blame, or praise, or counsel; and the faith and hope, and love of all would be refreshed by their very meeting around the table. How dear these hours of quiet home life were to Jesus Himself, is seen in the tenderness with which He saw His "children" in the group they brought around Him,—as if they replaced in His heart the household affections of the family; and in the pain and almost womanly fondness with which He hesitated to pronounce His last farewell to them. To the disciples themselves, they grew to be an imperishable memory, which they were fain, in compliance with their Master's wish, to perpetuate daily, in their breaking of bread. His greatness and condescension, the loving familiarity and fond endearments of close intercourse, the peace and quiet after the strife of the day, the feeling of security under His eye and care, made these hours a recollection that grew brighter and more sacred with the lapse of years, and deepened the longing

for His return, or for their departure to be with Him.

In this delightful family life there was, however, nothing like communism, for there is not a trace of the property of each being thrown into a common fund. His disciples had, indeed, left all; but they had not sold it to help the general treasury. Some of them still retained funds of their own, and the women who accompanied them still kept their property. When Jesus paid the Temple tax for Himself and Peter, He did not think of doing so for all his disciples. It was left to them to pay for themselves. The simple wants of each day were provided by free contributions, when not proffered by hospitality, nor did He receive even these from His disciples, though Rabbis were permitted to accept a honorarium from their scholars. "Ye have received for nothing," said He, "give for nothing." (Matt. x. 8.) He took no gifts of money from the people, nor did He let His disciples collect alms, as the Rabbis did from their scholars. The only bounty He accepted was the entertainment and shelter always ready for Him in friendly Galilee. From the generous women who followed Him, He, indeed, accepted passing support, but in contrast to the greed of the Rabbis, He only used their liberality for the need of the moment. His little circle was never allowed to suffer want, but was always able to distribute charity, and, though He seems to have carried no money, He expressly distinguishes both Himself and His disciples from the poor.

His presence among the disciples was seldom interrupted even for a brief interval. He might be summoned to heal some sick person, or invited to some meal; or He might wish to be alone, for a

time, in His chamber or among the hills, while He prayed ; but these were only absences of a few hours. It would seem as if the kiss of salutation in such cases greeted His return. He gave the word for setting out on a journey, or for going by boat, and the disciples procured what was needed by the way, if by land, and plied the oar, if on the lake.

He always travelled on foot, and was often thankful for a draught of water, as He toiled along the hot sides of the white hills, or for a piece of bread, procured in some villages through which He passed. Sometimes He went with his disciples, sometimes before them, leaving them to their own conversation, but noting and reproving, at once, their misunderstandings, or momentary misconceptions.

When a resting-place had to be found for the night, He was wont to send on some of His disciples before, or He awaited an invitation on His arrival; His disciples sharing the friendly welcome, or distributing themselves in other houses. The entertainment must have varied in different dwellings, from the simplicity of the prophet's chamber where the Shunammite had provided a bed, a table, a stool, and a lamp, to the friendship and busy womanly ministrations and homage of lowly discipleship, of homes like the cottage of Bethany. Where he was received, He entered with the invocation, "Peace be to this house,"—but unlike the Pharisees, without asking any questions as to the Levitical cleanness of the house, or its tables, or benches, or vessels. It was very rarely, one would suppose, that He was not gladly entertained, but when at any time He met with inhospitality, He only went on to the next village. Sometimes He

bore this rejection silently, but at others, moved at the spirit evinced, He shook the very dust of the town from His feet on leaving it, as a protest. Where meekness could be shown He showed it, but where circumstances demanded, He was as stern as commonly He was gentle.

It is not easy to realize the daily life of one so different from ourselves as Jesus, but a delicate poetical mind* has imagined the scene of the healing of Mary Magdalene and the appearance and acts of Christ so finely, that I borrow some passages from his pen.

The landing place at Capernaum was at the south side of the town. Thither the boats came that brought over wood from the forests of Gaulonites, and thither the boat steered that bore Jesus, His four earliest disciples acting as boatmen. He had been on the other side of the lake, and had returned now, in the evening. The sun was just setting, but a few beams seems to have lingered, to die away on His face, and the full moon rose, from behind the brown hills, still bathed in purple, as if to see Him. The soft evening wind had risen to cool His brow, and the water, sparkling in the moonlight, heaved and sank round the boat, rocking it gently. As it touched the shore there were few people about, but a boat from Magdala lay near, with a sick person in it, whom it had taken her mother's utmost strength to hold, and keep from uttering loud cries of distress. She had been brought in the hope of finding Jesus, that He might cure her.

"Master," said John, "there is work yonder for you already." "I must always be doing the work of Him that sent me," replied Jesus; "the night

* Delitzsch, a learned German Scholar.

cometh when no man can work." The mother of the sick woman had recognised Him at the first glance, for no one could mistake Him, and forthwith cried out with a heart-rending voice, "O Jesus, our helper and teacher, Thou Messenger of the All-Merciful, help my poor child,—for the Holy One, blessed be His name, has heard my prayer that we should find Thee, and Thou us." Peter forthwith, with the help of the other three, who had let their oars rest idly on the water, turned the boat, so that it lay alongside the one from Magdala. Jesus now rose; the mother sank on her knees; but the sick woman tried with all her might to break away, and to throw herself into the water, on the far side of the boat. The steersman, however, and John, who had sprung over, held her by the arms, while the mother buried her face in the long plaited hair of her child. Her tears had ceased to flow; she was lost in silent prayer. "Where are these people from?" asked Jesus of the boatman, and added, to His disciples, when He heard that she came from Magdala, "Woe to this Magdala, for it will become a ruin for its wickedness! The rich gifts it sends to Jerusalem will not help it, for, as the prophet says, 'They are bought with the wages of uncleanness, and to that they will again return.' (Micah i. 7). Turn her face to me that I may see her," added He. It was not easy to do this, for the sick one held her face bent over towards the water, as far as possible. John managed it, however, by kind words. "Mary," said he, for he had asked her mother her name, "do you wish to be for ever under the power of demons? See, the Conqueror of demons is before thee; look on Him, that you may be healed. We are all praying for you, as Moses, peace be to him, once prayed for his sister,

—‘O God, heal her.’ Do not put our prayer to shame; now is the moment when you can make yourself and your mother happy.” These words told; and no longer opposing strength to strength, she allowed them to raise her head and turn her face to Jesus. But when she saw Him, her whole body was so violently convulsed, that the boat swayed to and fro, and she shrieked out the most piercing wails which sounded far over the lake.

Jesus, however, fixing His eyes on hers, kept them from turning away, and as He gazed, His look seemed to enter her soul, and break the seven-fold chain in which it lay bound. The poor raving creature now became quiet, and did not need to be held; her convulsions ceased, the contortions of her features and the wildness of her eyes passed off, and profuse sweat burst from her brow and mingled with her tears. Her mother stepped back, and the healed one sank down on the spot where her mother had been praying, and muttered, with subdued trembling words, to Jesus,—“O Lord, I am a great sinner; is the door of repentance still open for me?” “Be comforted, my daughter,” answered He, “God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; thou hast been a habitation of evil spirits, become now a temple of the living God.” The mother, unable to restrain herself, broke out—“Thanks to Thee, Thou consolation of Israel,” but He went on,—“Return now, quickly, to Magdala, and be calm, and give thanks to God in silence.” John stepped back into the boat to Jesus, and the other boat shot out into the lake, on the way home. The two women sat in the middle seat. Mary held her mother in her arms in grateful thanks, and neither spoke, but both kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, till the shore jutting out westwards, hid Him from their sight.

When the boat with the women was gone, Peter bound his to the post to which the other had been tied, but Jesus sat still in deep thought, without looking round, and the disciples remained motionless beside Him, for reverence forbade them to ask Him to go ashore. Meanwhile, the people of Capernaum, men, women, and children, streamed down in bands ; some soldiers of the Roman-Herodian garrison, and some strange faces from Perea, Decapolis, and Syria, among them.

The open space had filled, and Peter ventured to whisper, in a low voice which concealed his impatience, " Our Lord and Master—the people have assembled and wait for Thee." On this Jesus rose. Peter made a bridge from the boat to the shore with a plank, hastening across to make it secure, and to open the way ; for the crowd was very dense at the edge of the water. Christ now left the boat, followed by the three other disciples, and when He had stepped ashore, said to Peter, " Simon Peter."—for thus He addressed him when He had need of his faithful and zealous service in the things of the kingdom of God—" I shall take my stand under the palm tree yonder." It was hard, however, to make way through the crowd, for those who had set themselves nearest the water were mostly sick people, to whom the others, from compassion, had given the front place. Indeed, Jesus had scarcely landed, before cries of help rose, in different dialects, and in every form of appeal. " Rabbi, Rabboni,"* " Holy One of the Most High ! " " Son of David ! " " Son of God ! " mingled one with the other. Jesus, however, waving them back with His hand, said, Let me pass ! to-night is not to be for the healing

* *Rabbi*, my master ; *Rabboni* my great master.

of your bodily troubles, but that you may hear the word of life, for the good of your souls." On hearing this they pressed towards Him, that they might at least touch Him. When, at last, with the help of His disciples, He made His way to the palm, He motioned to the people to sit down on the grass. The knoll from which the palm rose was only a slight one, but when the crowd had arranged themselves in rows, it sufficed to lift Him sufficiently above them. The men stood in the back-ground, leaving the front for the women and children.

It is a mistake to think of Jesus standing while He taught. He stood in the synagogue at Nazareth while the prophets were being read, but He sat down to teach. He sat as He taught in the temple, and when He addressed the multitude He had miraculously fed; and when He spoke from Simon Peter's boat, He did so sitting.

Under the palm lay a large stone, on which many had sat before, to enjoy the view over the lake, or the shade of the branches above. The Rabbis often chose such open air spots for their addresses. There was nothing extraordinary, therefore, when Jesus sat down on it, and made it His pulpit. His dress was clean and carefully chosen, but simple. On His head, held in its place by a cord, He wore a white cloth, the ends of which hung down His shoulders. Over His tunic, which reached to the hands and feet, was a blue Tallith, with the prescribed tassels at the four corners, but only as large as Moses required. It was so thrown over Him, and so held together, that the grey red-striped under-garment was little seen, and His feet, which had sandals, not shoes, were only noticed occasionally, when He moved. When He had sat down, and looked over the people, they became

stiller and stiller, till nothing was heard but the soft splash of the ripple on the beach.

As He sat on the stone, Simon and Andrew, the sons of Jonas, stood on His right and left hand, with James and John, sons of Zebedee. The people stood around the slope, for as yet Rabbis were heard standing. "Sons of Israel, men of Galilee," He began, "the time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come; repent and believe the Gospel. Moses, your teacher, has said,—'A prophet will the Lord your God arise unto you from your brethren, like unto me. Him shall ye hear. But he who will not hear this prophet shall die!' Amen, I say unto you; he that believes on me has everlasting life. No man knows the Father but the Son, and no one knows the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Son reveals Him." 'Then, with a louder voice, He continued, "Come to me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Then, drawing to a close, He added, "Take on you the yoke of the kingdom of heaven, for the kingdom of heaven is the fulfilling of the law and the prophets. Give up that which is worth little, that you may have what is of great price. Become wise changers who value holy money above all other, and the pearl of price above all. He that has ears to hear, let him hear."

What grace, O Lord, and beauty shone
Around Thy steps below!
What patient love was seen in all
Thy life and death of woe!

For ever on Thy burdened heart
A weight of sorrow hung,

Yet no ungentle, murmuring word
Escaped Thy silent tongue.

Thy foes might hate, despise, revile,
Thy friends unfaithful prove :
Unwearied in forgiveness still,
Thy heart could only love.

Oh ! give us hearts to love like Thee,
Like Thee, O Lord, to grieve
Far more for others' sins, than all
The wrongs that we receive.

One with Thyself, may every eye
In us, Thy brethren, see
That gentleness and grace that spring
From union, Lord, with Thee.

Denny.

X. THE CLOSING EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

The Entry into Jerusalem.—Zechariah, a prophet who lived about 500 B.C., foretold that the Messiah would enter Jerusalem in triumph. He said, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion :* shout, O daughter of Jerusalem ! Behold, thy King cometh unto thee ; He is just and having salvation ; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." (Zech. ix. 9.) Among the Jews the horse was used in war : the ass is a much larger and finer animal in Palestine than in this country ; and, instead of being despised, princes and judges rode on it. The prophecy presented the promised King of Israel as no warlike conqueror, but a peaceful and just ruler.

*A name for Jerusalem. Zion was one of the hills on which the city was built.

The passover was near, and the city was filled with people who had come to the feast. The raising of Lazarus from the dead led many to believe in Jesus, and great numbers wished to see Him. Jesus was staying at Bethany, but it was known that He was coming into Jerusalem the following day. Two disciples were sent on to get the use of an ass's colt on which "never man sat." If the owners objected, they were to say, "The Lord hath need of him." The disciples put some of their clothes on the colt, and set Jesus upon it to ride into Jerusalem. They and the multitude spread their garments on the ground, and cut down branches from the trees, and scattered them along the way for Jesus to pass over. A great many people had heard that the Prophet of Nazareth was coming to Jerusalem; and they went out in crowds to meet Him, carrying palm branches in their hands. When Jesus had crossed the summit of the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem was full in view, all the multitudes, both before and after, cried, "Blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna* in the highest!"

The sight of Jerusalem, with its beautiful temple and palaces, filled the eyes of Jesus with tears, and He wept over it. He had taught in it; He had done miracles; He had often longed to gather the people of it together as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but they would not; and now they were going to kill Him. He wept over the punishment that would befall the guilty city.

The procession came down the mountain side, and ascending the slope which led to the gate of the city,

* The word means, *save, we pray*. It is taken from Psalm cxviii. 25.

passed on through the streets to the temple. The citizens of Jerusalem ran to their doors and asked, "Who is this?" to which the answer was given, "This is Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth." Even the children cried in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David." The chief priests and scribes were much displeased at this, but Jesus showed them from Psalm viii. 2, that God accepts the praises even of infants.

In the evening, Jesus returned to Bethany.

Matt. xxi. 1-16. Mark xi. 1-11. Luke xix. 29-44.

John xii. 12-36

The Last Supper.—The Thursday evening came when the passover was to be observed. Jesus knew that it was the night before His death, and that this was His farewell meeting with His disciples.

During the day Jesus had sent Peter and John to make ready for the passover in a large upper room, which a man would show them. In the evening, He sat down with His disciples. Even then they began to dispute among themselves which should be the greatest. Jesus had reproved them before by gentle words; now He taught them in a way which they could never forget. Rising from supper, He took off His upper dress, and bound a towel round His waist. Then He poured some water into a bason, and began to wash the feet of His disciples, and to wipe them with the towel. Peter at first refused to allow Him to wash his feet; but after Jesus explained why it was necessary, he willingly agreed. When Jesus had finished, He sat down again. He wished to teach the disciples a lesson of humility and love. "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

While they were still at supper, Jesus, greatly troubled, said, "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." The disciples looked round at each other, wondering of whom He spoke. Then, one by one, they asked, "Lord, is it I?" John was sitting next to Jesus; Peter made a sign to him to ask Jesus who was meant. Jesus told John that it was he to whom He would give a sop, or small piece, after He had dipped it. The sop was given to Judas Iscariot, who had agreed with the chief priests to point out Jesus for thirty pieces of silver,—about forty rupees (the value of a slave). Jesus said to Judas, "That thou doest, do quickly;" but the others did not know what this meant. Judas immediately went out.

Afterwards, when Peter said that he was ready to go with Jesus to prison and death, Jesus told him that before the cock crew, he would thrice deny that he knew Him. The other disciples also said that they were ready to die with Jesus.

The passover was first observed in Egypt. The Israelites were told to kill a lamb and sprinkle the blood on the door-posts of their houses. When the angel sent to destroy the first-born of the Egyptians saw it, he would *pass over* the house. The lamb was afterwards eaten, with unleavened bread*and bitter herbs. The lamb was an emblem of Christ. As Jesus was about to die, the passover was no longer to be kept, but He appointed a new ordinance to be observed in its place. While Jesus was at table, He took bread, blessed it, and brake it and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you." Afterwards He took the cup of wine, and gave it to them, saying,

* Bread which was not made light by leaven.

"This cup as the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. This do in remembrance of me."

Jesus did not mean that the bread and wine were really His body and blood ; but He wished to teach the disciples, that just as the bread had been broken and the wine poured out, so His body would be broken and His blood shed for our salvation. *Testament* here means *agreement*. The blood of the *old* testament was that of the lamb sprinkled by the Israelites. The blood of Christ is that of the *new* covenant, by which God promises to give pardon and eternal life to all who believe in Jesus. When the followers of Jesus obey this command, they are reminded of His death. It will be observed by them till He comes again.

"Baptism denotes the spiritual birth of the Christian," says Angus ; "what is called the Lord's Supper denotes the origin and continued support of his spiritual life."

The remark made about the wine at Cana may be repeated. At the passover, the pure juice of the grape was used.

After the institution of the Supper, Jesus gave the addresses found in John xiv-xvi. He also offered the beautiful prayer given in chapter xvii. About to leave His disciples, He prayed that they might be kept from all the evil that is in the world, and that they might be made holy. He prayed also for all those who should believe in Him in the years to come.

Matt. xxvi. 17-35. Mark xvi. 12-31. Luke xxii. 7-34. John xiii-xvii.

The Garden of Gethsemane.—About half a mile from Jerusalem, at the foot of the Mount of Olives,

there is a garden, called Gethsemane.* Jesus often used to go there with His disciples. After the passover, late at night, Jesus went with the eleven to the garden. He said to His disciples, "Sit you here, while I go and pray yonder;" but He called Peter, James, and John to come with Him a little farther. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with me." Jesus went about a stone's cast, fell on His face, and prayed with strong cryings and tears: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet not what I will, but as Thou wilt." What was the cup which Jesus found so dreadful? The punishment of our sins, which He was to bear in His own body on the cross. As man, He shrank from the suffering; though His heart was steadfastly fixed to do the will of His Father. The cup could not be taken away: we could not be saved unless Jesus died: but His heavenly Father sent an angel to strengthen Him. When Jesus went to His disciples, He found them asleep: sorrow had made them heavy. He said to Peter, "Peter, couldst not thou watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation."

Then Jesus left His disciples, and again prayed: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, Thy will be done." When He returned to His disciples, they were again asleep.

Jesus went and prayed a third time. His agony was such that His sweat was it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. When He rose up

* The world means *oil press*. It contained olive trees, from the fruit of which oil was pressed.

from prayer and came the third time to His disciples, He found them still sleeping. He said to them, "The hour is come, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, for he that betrayeth me is at hand."

While Jesus was yet speaking, Judas came with a band of men, with swords, and sticks, and lanterns, from the chief priests. Judas was to point out Jesus by kissing Him.

When the men came up, Jesus went forth to meet them and said, "Whom seek ye?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." As soon as He had spoken these words, they all went backward, and fell to the ground. After they had recovered themselves, Jesus said, "If ye seek Me, let these go their way." Judas came near, and saying, "Hail, Master," kissed Him. Jesus only said, "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?"

When the men laid hold on Jesus, Peter, who had a sword, cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant; but Jesus touched the ear and healed it. He also told Peter to put up his sword; for His heavenly Father could give Him twelve legions* of angels if He asked for them.

Then all the disciples forsook Jesus and fled.

Matt. xxvi. 36-56. Mark xiv. 32-50. Luke xxii. 39-53. John xviii. 1-12.

Jesus before the High Priest.—Jesus was led bound first to Annas, and afterwards to the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest, where many of the chief priests, elders, and scribes, were waiting for Him. They began to ask Jesus many questions,

* A legion was a division of the Roman army, containing from 3,000 to 6,000 men. Twelve legions denote an indefinitely large number.

that they might find some excuse for putting Him to death. At last the high priest said to Him, "Tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God." When Jesus said, "I am," the high priest rent his clothes as a sign of great grief. He accused Jesus of speaking blasphemy, because He claimed to be the Son of God. When He asked those present what should be done with Jesus, they all cried out, "He is guilty of death." Then they spat in His face, blindfolded Him, buffeted Him, saying in mockery, "Prophesy, who is it that smote Thee." The servants also struck Him with the palms of their hands. Jesus bore it all meekly, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps.

Matt. xxvi. 57-68. Mark xiv. 55-65. Luke xxii. 63-71. John xviii. 19-24.

Peter's Denial.—It has been mentioned that the disciples, instead of dying with Jesus, all fled. But two of them, Peter and John, ashamed of their conduct, followed Jesus, a long way behind, to the palace of the high priest.

John was known to the high priest, and went inside the palace. He also spoke to the maid-servant who kept the door, and Peter was allowed to come in.

As it was a very cold night, the servants of the high priest and the soldiers made a fire in the court-yard. Peter sat down among them to warm himself and see the end.

First, the maid that kept the door, after earnestly looking at Peter, said, "Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?" Peter denied it, saying, "Woman, I know Him not." Peter was so frightened, that he got up and went out into the porch, or entrance. There a second maid saw him and

said, "This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth." A man said, "Surely thou art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth* thee." The people of Galilee were known by their pronunciation. Peter said, with an oath, "I do not know the man." An hour after, a relation of the high priest's servant, whose ear was cut off, said to Peter, "Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?" Peter then began to curse and to swear, saying, "Man, I know not what thou sayest." The cock now crew the second time.† Jesus then turned and looked at Peter. It was such a look of sorrow, love, and pity, that it broke Peter's heart. Ashamed of his cowardice and wickedness, he went out and wept bitterly.

When we are most confident of our strength, we are in the greatest danger. Peter did not obey Christ's warning, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation," and thus he fell.

Matt. xxvi. 69-75. Mark xiv. 16-72. Luke xxii. 56-62. John xviii. 17, 25-27.

Christ before Pilate.—Early in the morning, the chief priests and a number of people took Jesus to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. Jesus was led inside the judgment hall; but His accusers remained without. Like Brahmins who think themselves polluted by the touch of Europeans, the chief priests would not enter the hall, lest they should be defiled. Pilate then went out to them.

The high priest said that Jesus ought to die, because He claimed to be the Son of God. As Pilate would not listen to such a charge, a false accusation was brought, that Jesus forbade giving tribute,

* Now, betrayeth.

† The cock, it is said, crows slightly after midnight; but its second crowing, about 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, is known as *cock-crowing*.

or paying taxes, to Caesar, saying that He himself was a King. Jesus acknowledged to Pilate that He was a King, but that His kingdom was not of this world. Pilate then went out again and said, "I find no fault in this man."

The chief priests and the multitude were the more fierce, and accused Jesus of stirring up the people from Galilee to Jerusalem. When Pilate heard of Galilee, he thought he might throw the responsibility on Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, who was then in Jerusalem. To Herod, Jesus was therefore sent. Herod had put John the Baptist to death, and Jesus would not answer one of his many questions, which proceeded only from curiosity. Angry at the silence of Jesus, Herod gave Him up to his guard to be made sport of, and sent Him back to Pilate, clothed, in mockery, with a brilliant robe.

It was the custom of the Roman governor to release any prisoner the people asked in honour of the feast. Pilate thought he might get them to ask that Jesus might be set free. He said that he had found no fault in Jesus, nor had Herod. Then he asked them whether he should release Barabbas, a robber and murderer, or Christ? The chief priests stirred up the people to cry out, "Not this man, but Barabbas."

Before releasing Barabbas, Pilate took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." The people cried out, "His blood be upon us, and on our children."

Pilate then ordered Jesus to be scourged. After the soldiers had done this, they put an old purple robe on His bleeding back, pretending to dress Him like a king; they platted a crown of thorns, and pressed it on His head till the blood ran down His

face; they bowed the knee before Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on Him, they took the reed from His hand, and struck Him on the head with it.

Pilate hoped that if he showed Jesus, thus bleeding and tortured, the people would have pity on Him; so He led Him forth, wearing the crown of thorns and purple robe, and said, "Behold the man!" But the chief priests only cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate, still wishing to release Jesus, said, "Shall I crucify your king?" Though the chief priests hated the Roman yoke, they answered, "We have no king but Cæsar." If Pilate released Jesus, his own loyalty would be called in question. Upon this, Pilate gave Him up to be crucified.

The prophecy of Isaiah was thus fulfilled: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." liii. 7. In Pilate's conduct we see the want of moral courage, so often shown in India. He knew what was right, and had some desire to do it; but he yielded to others.

Matt. xxvii. 11-30. Mark xv. 2-19; Luke xxiii. 2-25. John xviii. 28-40; xix. 1-16.

The Crucifixion.—The soldiers took off from Jesus the purple robe, put His own clothes on Him, and then led Him to Calvary,* where He was to be crucified. Persons condemned to this punishment had to carry the cross to which they were to be nailed; but Jesus was so faint, that He soon sank under its weight. The soldiers caught a man, named Simon, of Cyrene, coming out of the coun-

* *Calvary* is the Greek for *skull*; in Hebrew, *Golgotha*. It is supposed to have been a small round hill, so called from its shape.

try, and laid the cross on him, that he might bear it after Jesus.

A great crowd of people followed. Some were the enemies of Christ, rejoicing at the thought of His coming death. Others were women, who mourned over what was about to happen. Jesus, turning round, said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me; but weep for yourselves and for your children."

On account of the wickedness of the people, Jerusalem, after dreadful suffering, was to be taken by the Romans, and great numbers were to be put to death.

When they came to Calvary, the soldiers took off the clothes of Jesus, and after laying Him on the cross, they hammered large nails through His hands and feet. Next they lifted up the cross, and fixed one end of it firmly into a hole made in the ground. Two thieves were crucified at the same time, one on each side of Jesus.

The soldiers took the outer garment of Jesus and tore it into four parts, one to each. The undercoat had no seam, but was woven in one piece. The soldiers therefore cast lots for it. Thus the prophecy, spoken a thousand years before by David, was fulfilled: "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots." Psalm xxii. 18.

When people were crucified, it was the custom to write upon the cross the crime for which they suffered. As Jesus had done no wrong, Pilate wrote only, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The Jews did not like this, but Pilate would not alter it.

The chief priests, scribes, and elders stood mocking Jesus around the cross. They said, "He saved

others ; Himself He cannot save. If He be Christ, let Him come down from the cross." Jesus could have saved Himself. The voice which had stilled the waves could have blinded every hostile eye, and withered every arm lifted up against Him ; but He came to die for our salvation. If He had saved Himself, we must have perished. In a subsequent chapter, some remarks will be made on the necessity of Christ's death.

Both the two thieves at first railed at Jesus ; but one of them afterwards, as he saw how He bore His sufferings, repented. He reproved his companion, and acknowledged that they suffered justly, while Jesus had done nothing wrong. Then, looking at Jesus, he said, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom." The dying thief showed wonderful faith, and Jesus said to him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."*

There was a very sorrowful group standing near the cross. The mother of Jesus had come to see her Son die, and it was as if a sword was piercing her own heart. Three other women were there, and John the beloved disciple. Jesus said to Mary, "Behold thy son !" Then He said to John, "Behold thy mother !" Jesus meant that John was to take care of Mary as if she was his own mother, and from that hour John took her to his own home.

Jesus was crucified at nine o'clock in the morning. From twelve o'clock till three o'clock, there was darkness over the land. As Jesus had taken the place of sinners, He felt as if His Father had hidden His face from Him ; so at three o'clock He cried, with a loud voice, "My God, My God, why hast

* Paradise is a Persian word, meaning a *pleasant garden*. Here it denotes the state of the blessed after death.

Thou forsaken me?" Then He said again, "I thirst," upon which one of the soldiers filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it to His mouth. When Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, "It is finished." He then cried with a loud voice, "Father into Thy hands I commend my spirit," bowed His head, and died. At the moment of His death, there was a great earthquake. The earth shook, rocks were split, and the large beautiful curtain in the temple was torn from top to bottom. All persons around the cross were greatly afraid, and the centurion said, "Certainly this was the Son of God."

Jesus said, "It is finished." He had finished the work which His Father had given Him to do. The great sacrifice for sin had now been offered up, and all other sacrifices were to cease. The work of Jesus for our salvation was now complete. But we have to fulfil our part. We must accept Him as our Saviour, or for us He will have died in vain.

Matt. xxvii. 31-56. Mark xv. 20-41. Luke xxiii. 24-49. John xiv. 16-30.

The Burial of Christ.—Jesus was crucified on Friday. The next day was the Jewish Sabbath, and a great day, because it was at the time of the pass-over. Some of the Jews asked Pilate to let the bodies be taken down from the cross before Sabbath. Pilate then sent soldiers to see if those who were crucified were dead, and to kill them if they were not. The two thieves were still living; so the soldiers broke their legs, to kill them quickly. When they came to Jesus, they found that He was dead. They did not break His legs, but one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and there came out blood and water. The prophecies were thus fulfilled: "A bone of Him shall not be

broken,"* and "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."†

There was a rich man, named Joseph, of the city of Arimathea. He had been a disciple of Christ for some time, but secretly for fear of the Jews. His faith was now strengthened, and he went boldly to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus, that he might bury it in his own new tomb, which he had made in his garden. Pilate first asked the centurion if Jesus was dead, and when he knew it, he gave Joseph leave to take the body. Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, went with Joseph, bringing about a hundred pound weight of sweet spices. They took the body of Jesus, wrapped it round with white linen and the spices, and laid it in the grave. The tomb was hewn out of a rock. A great stone was rolled against the entrance, to prevent anything from getting in.

The chief priests asked Pilate to set a watch at the sepulchre, or grave, because Jesus had said that He would rise on the third day. The disciples might come by night and steal away the body, and say that He had risen. Pilate told them to make the sepulchre as sure as they could. They sealed the stone, and a guard of Roman soldiers was set.

Matt. xxvii. 56-66. Mark xv. 42-47. Luke xxiii. 50-56. John xix. 31-42.

The Resurrection.—The women who stood near the cross of Jesus never went away till they had seen the body laid in the grave. They also prepared sweet spices and ointment; but as the next day was Sabbath, they rested according to the fourth

* The reference is to the lamb at the passover, a type of Christ. Exodus xii. 46.

† Zechariah xii. 10.

commandment.* Very early on the morning of the third day, while it was yet dark, they came to the sepulchre. They did not know about the guard ; but as they were walking along, they said, "Who shall roll us away the stone?" Before they reached the tomb, there had been a great earthquake. The angel of the Lord, his face bright as lightning, and his clothes white as snow, had come and rolled away the stone. For fear of him, the soldiers trembled, and became like dead men. As soon as they recovered, they went to the rulers, and told them what had happened.

When the women came to the sepulchre, they found that the stone was rolled away, and the tomb empty. Mary Magdalene, supposing that the enemies of Jesus had taken away the body, hasted off to tell Peter and John, while Mary, the mother of James, and Salome remained. On going forward they saw an angel, in the form of a young man, sitting on the right side of the tomb, who said that Jesus had risen, and that they were to tell His disciples that He would go before them to Galilee.

On hearing Mary Magdalene's report, John and Peter instantly set out, and Mary along with them. John outran Peter, and first reached the sepulchre ; but whilst he was looking in, Peter came up, and went inside. There he saw the napkin carefully folded, and the linen clothes lying. After John also went in, the two disciples returned to their own home, but Mary Magdalene remained alone in the garden.

While Mary was weeping, she came near the sepulchre. On looking in, she saw what appeared

* "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

to be two men sitting, one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. They asked her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She answered, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." Just then, turning round, a figure stood before her. Her eyes dim with tears, she did not know at first that it was Jesus. He said to her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She supposing him to be the gardener, said, "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus then said, "Mary!" She knew the voice, and fell down at His feet, saying, "Rabboni," my Master. Jesus said to her, "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." This showed that although the disciples had all forsaken Him, He had forgiven them, and looked upon them as brothers.

Mary Magdalene went and told the mourning disciples that she had seen the Lord, but they did not believe her.

Matt. xxviii. 1-10. Mark xvi. 1-9. Luke xxiv. 1-12.

John xx. 1-18.

First Appearances to the Disciples.—Some time during the day, Jesus showed Himself to Peter, who had thrice denied Him, to assure him of forgiveness. In the afternoon, He appeared in another form to two of the disciples, who were going to Emmaus, a village about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were kept from knowing Him while He talked with them by the way, and showed from the prophets that it was needful for the Messiah to suffer. As it was late when they got to Emmaus, they asked Jesus to stay with them that night. At supper He took bread, blessed it, brake it, and gave

it to them. Then they knew that it was Jesus, but He vanished out of their sight.

The two disciples immediately returned to Jerusalem, where they found the apostles and others gathered together. The apostles said to them that Jesus had risen and appeared to Peter. The two disciples then told how Jesus had met them, and was known in breaking of bread.

While they were yet speaking, though the doors were shut, they saw Jesus standing before them. He said to them, "Peace be unto you," but they were terribly frightened, supposing that they had seen a spirit. Jesus said to them, "Why are you troubled? Handle me, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Then He showed them His hands and feet, with the marks of the nails. The disciples could scarcely believe it yet for joy; so Jesus asked them for something to eat, and they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, which He ate before them. Then He breathed upon them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

Thomas, one of the twelve disciples, was absent the night that Jesus appeared. When told about it he said, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." About a week after, while the eleven disciples were at supper with the doors shut, Jesus again stood in the midst of them, and said, "Peace be unto you." He then said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hand; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas did not doubt any longer; but said, "My Lord and my God." Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast

believed ; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Matt. xxviii. 11-15. Mark xvi. 10-14. Luke xxiv. 10-43. John xx. 19-29.

Appearances in Galilee.—Jesus had told the disciples to go before Him to Galilee, where He would meet them. Jesus did not come immediately. As they were poor men, obliged to work for their daily food, some of them began again their old trade of fishing. Peter proposed it, and the others agreed. They got a boat ready and went out fishing all night, but caught nothing.

When the morning was come, they saw Jesus standing on the shore, but they did not know who it was. He said to them, "Children, have you anything to eat?" They answered, "No." Then He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find." When they did so, they were not able to draw it up, because there were in it such a number of large fishes. John then said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Peter heard this, he threw himself into the water, and swam to the shore. The others followed more slowly in the boat, dragging the net with fishes.

When they came to land they saw a fire there, with some fish laid upon it, and some bread. Jesus had prepared it, for He knew that His disciples would be cold, tired, and hungry. Then He said to them, "Come and eat." None of the disciples dare ask Him, "Who art Thou?" knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then gave them bread and fish.

Peter had said to Jesus on the night He was betrayed, "Though all men shall be offended of Thee, yet will I never be offended." Jesus now asked him, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me

more than these?" Peter did not say now that he loved Christ more than others, but only, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Jesus then said to him, "Feed my lambs." Jesus calls Himself the good Shepherd, and His followers are His sheep. The "lambs" denote children and new converts. Peter was to teach them. Jesus again asked, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" To this Peter made the same answer. Jesus then said, "Tend my sheep." Peter was to watch over, teach, and guide Christ's followers. Jesus asked Peter the third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" Peter, grieved because Jesus asked him so often, said, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Once more Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."

Peter had thrice denied his Lord; so Jesus wished to hear him say three times that he loved Him. Peter now also felt very humble. Jesus told Peter what would happen to him when he was old. He was to be crucified like his Master.

Jesus told His disciples to go up a mountain in Galilee, where He would meet them. More than five hundred assembled. When they saw Him they worshipped Him, but some doubted. Jesus then said to them, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." This is the command which missionaries seek to obey.

Matt. xxviii. 16-20. John xxi. 1-24. I Cor. xv. 6.

The Ascension.—Jesus remained forty days upon the earth after rising from the dead. During that period He appeared several times to His disciples,

and taught them many things. At last the day came when He must leave them and go up to heaven. They were in Jerusalem, but He led them to Bethany, a village on the eastern side of the Mount of Olives. He told them what they were to do when He was gone. They were to remain in Jerusalem till they received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Once more the Apostles asked Jesus, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus told them that the Father kept in His own power the fulfilment of this prophecy. The Apostles were to receive power from on high, and bear witness of Him all over the earth, beginning at Jerusalem, where He had been crucified.

When Jesus had spoken these words, He lifted up His hands and blessed them. While He blessed them, He was parted from them, and taken up into heaven, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

As they were steadfastly looking toward heaven, two angels, appearing like men in white garments, stood by them. The angels said, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven."

At the last day, Jesus will come to judge the world. "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him." All who have ever lived will then stand before Him to give an account of their deeds, whether they have been good or whether they have been evil.

The apostles returned from Olivet to Jerusalem, and were continually in the temple, praising God.

Mark xvi. 19-20. Luke xxiv. 51-52. Acts i. 9-12.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

XI. INTRODUCTION.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, the fifth book of the New Testament, is professedly a continuation of the third Gospel, and is addressed to the same person, Theophilus. According to internal and external evidence, both were written by the same author. They are more than fifty words used in the Gospel and in Acts which are not found elsewhere in the New Testament.

Contents.—The book of Acts describes the early history of the Christian Church. It may be divided into two parts :

I. *The Spread of Christianity among the Jews, chiefly through the Apostle Peter.* Chaps. i-xii.

II. *The Planting of the Christian Church among the Gentiles through Paul and his Companions.* Chaps. xiii-xxviii.

"It begins at Jerusalem;" says Plumptre, "It ends at Rome. When it opens, circumcision is required, as well as baptism, of every disciple; the Church of Christ is outwardly but a Jewish sect. When it ends, every barrier between Jew and Gentile has been broken down, and the Church has become catholic* and all-embracing."

Title.—The present title does not seem to have been given to the book by the author. Though called *The Acts of the Apostles*, it is confined mainly to an account of the labours of Peter and Paul. Some events in which John and James took part are mentioned; the other apostles are only once named. Luke, in his Gospel, says that he gave an account only of what "Jesus began to do and

* The word *catholic* means *general*.

teach." The continuation may be said similarly to describe what the disciples *began* to do and teach when Jesus was gone away from them. The Acts of the Apostles is a history of *beginnings only*. All the apostles took part in preaching the Gospel, though their labours are not mentioned.

Sources.—Luke obtained accounts of the earlier events recorded in Acts from persons well acquainted with what had taken place. The latter part of the book, chiefly describes what he saw himself, while the companion of Paul. Before Paul's vision at Troas, he uses "they;" in several places after that he writes "we," "us," xvi. 10. It is supposed that the greater portion of the book was written by Luke under the guidance of Paul.

Date.—Acts was probably written about A. D. 63. It ends with the second year of Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. Paul was beheaded by Nero about the year 67 A. D. This would have been mentioned, if the book had been written after his death.

XII.—THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE JEWS. CHAPS. I-XII.

After a short introduction, Luke describes more fully than in his Gospel, the ascension of Christ. As this has already been noticed, a commencement will be made with the next event recorded.

The New Apostle.—After Christ's ascension, the disciples continued to meet for prayer in the large upper room, where the apostles resided. They were about one hundred and twenty in all. Among them was Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is here mentioned for the last time, and "His brethren." At first the brethren of Jesus did not believe in

Him (John vii. 5) ; but afterwards they did, and James, one of them, stood at the head of the church in Jerusalem.

At an early meeting Peter proposed the election of an apostle who should fill the place of Judas. Judas had agreed to betray Christ for thirty pieces of silver ; but when he saw Him condemned to death, he threw down the money, and went out and hanged himself. The rope breaking, he fell and burst asunder. As the money returned was the price of blood, the priests could not put it into the treasury of the temple ; but a field to bury strangers was bought with it, which was called in Aramaic, Aceldama, The field of blood.

David had said of Judas in the Psalms, "His bishoprick (office) let another take." (cix. 8.) Peter proposed that one who had been with them from the baptism of John till Christ's ascension, should be ordained as a witness of the resurrection. Two were chosen, Joseph, called Barsabas, and Matthias. Unable to determine which of these two should be the apostle, they asked God to chose for them. Then they cast lots, and God made the lot fall upon Matthias, who was numbered with the eleven Apostles.

Acts i. 13-26.

The Gift of the Holy Spirit.—Jesus told His disciples to remain in Jerusalem till they received the "promise of the Father," the gift of the Holy Spirit, by which they would be endued with power from on high. The following illustration may be used to give some idea of the work of the Holy Spirit. We were suffering from a deadly disease, for which we had no cure. At the cost of His life, Jesus Christ obtained a medicine, which was an infallible remedy. The physician who gives it to us is the Holy Spirit. Throughout the book of

Acts, the Holy Spirit stands out conspicuously as the great agent in the conversion of men.

Fifty days after the Passover, was the feast of Pentecost.* It was both a thanksgiving for the harvest, and a commemoration of the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, fifty days after the deliverance from Egypt. On the day of Pentecost, ten days after the Ascension, the apostles and other disciples were all met with one mind in one place. Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared tongues, like as of fire parting asunder, which stood for a time on each of the disciples. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and were enabled, through Him, to speak in new languages which they had never heard before.

Then, as now, Jews were scattered over the earth, and many of them had adopted the mother tongues of the countries in which they lived. They made great efforts, however, to come up to Jerusalem to the great annual festivals. At the feast of Pentecost, there were Parthians, Jews, Medes, Elamites, and Mesopotamians, representing the provinces to which the kings of Assyria and Babylon had first carried them captives; Jews from Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia,† Phrygia, and Pamphylia in Asia Minor; Jews from Libya and Cyrene in the north of Africa; Jews from Crete and Arabia; some came even from Rome, both Jews and proselytes.

News of the miraculous power given to the disciples soon spread through the city, and great numbers came together. The multitudes were

* From a Greek word, meaning fifty.

† Asia, now applied to the whole continent, first denoted the western part of Asia Minor.

astonished to hear the apostles speak each in his own language. They said, Are not these men Galileans? How is it that they can speak to us in our own tongues?

Miraculous powers were given to the disciples on the day of Pentecost to enable them to preach the Gospel to many nations at once, and as a sign that what they said was true. This is not necessary now, but the Holy Spirit is still needed to renew and sanctify the heart. Acts ii. 1-41.

Peter's First Sermon.—The Jews who did not understand the different languages spoken by the Apostles, said mockingly, "These men are filled with new wine." Peter stood up and explained that they were not drunk as they supposed. What they saw was a fulfilment of what Joel had foretold.* In the times of the Messiah God would pour out His Spirit on His servants, and enable them to prophesy. Jesus of Nazareth had done among them wonderful works, but with wicked hands they had crucified Him. God, however, had raised Him from the dead, as David had foretold in the Psalms (xvi. 8-11). David said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." The word "hell" is used in the Bible in different senses. The original word means the *unseen world*. Sometimes it denotes the grave; sometimes the state between death and the judgment; sometimes the place of punishment. Here it has the second meaning. David also said, "Neither wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." David could not refer to himself, for he was buried in the tomb which the Jews saw every day. Jesus was meant; His body was not

* Joel was a Jewish prophet who lived about 850 B.C. See Joel ii. 28, 29. Peter quotes from the Greek translation.

to moulder in the grave. God had raised Him up, of which the apostles were witnesses, and had given Him the highest place in heaven. The gift of the Holy Ghost was a proof of this. Lastly, he said to them that Jesus whom they had crucified was the Messiah.

When those who heard Peter saw that they were the murderers of the Messiah, whom they had been expecting for hundreds of years, they felt deeply their sin, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." That same day three thousand joined the apostles.

Peter said, "Be baptized every one of you." Some persons think that they may be Christians without being baptized; but Jesus requires His followers to confess Him before men, otherwise He will deny them at the last day. Luke xii. 8-9.

Acts ii. 12-47.

The Lame Man Healed.—Soon after the day of Pentecost, Peter and John were going into the temple at the hour of prayer, or three o'clock* in the afternoon. They saw a lame man, whom his friends brought and laid near the Beautiful Gate,† to beg from those who entered the temple. As Peter and John passed through the gate, the beggar asked alms of them. "Look on us," was the answer. The beggar did so, expecting to receive something. Peter then said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I to thee.

* By the Jewish reckoning from six in the morning, it was the ninth hour.

† This gate was made of Corinthian brass, a mixed metal more precious than silver.

In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

Peter took the lame man by the right hand and lifted him up. Immediately his feet received strength, and he went with Peter and John into the temple, praising God, and leaping for joy.

The man on whom this miracle was wrought had been lame from his birth, and was above forty years of age. He had sat so long at the Beautiful Gate, that he was well known. The people all ran to see him in the eastern part of the temple, called Solomon's Porch. Peter asked them why they wondered, why they looked at them so earnestly as if through their own power or holiness they had made the lame man walk? It was in the name of Jesus, whom they had denied and crucified, that the man was made whole. Peter told them how their sins might be blotted out, or forgiven. They must repent, change their minds about Jesus, turn round, and be His servants. He told them how Moses and other prophets had spoken of the Messiah, and how God had blessed them by sending His Son to turn every one of them from his iniquities.

While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests and Sadducees, grieved that they preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead, put them in prison. Many, however, believed, so that the number of the disciples had increased to about five thousand.

Next day the two apostles were called before the chief priests, who commanded them not to speak any more about Jesus. But Peter and John said, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." When they were let go, they reported

to their own company what the chief priests had said. When they had prayed for courage to go on preaching, the place was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spoke the word of God with boldness.

Acts iii. iv. 1-32.

Two Liars Struck Dead.—The early believers loved each other so much, that they were like one large family. They had all things in common, and those who had houses and other property sold them, and gave the money to the apostles for the poor among them. They were not obliged to do so, but they did it from love. It was not intended that this system should continue. One object might be to keep the early converts together for some time, that they might be more fully instructed before going out to preach the Gospel.

Among those who sold their lands, was a Jew, surnamed Barnabas, a native of the island of Cyprus. He brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But even in those early days there were hypocrites among the Christians. A man, named Ananias, and his wife Sapphira, sold some land. Ananias, with the knowledge of his wife, brought part of the price, and laid it at the apostles' feet as if it had been the whole. They thought they would be praised like Barnabas, while they would have some of the money to themselves. Peter was enabled to read the heart of Ananias. He told him that he was not obliged to sell the land at all; or if sold, to give any of the money. He might have brought a part, saying it was only a part. Ananias had tried to deceive Peter, but it was a lie to God.

When Ananias heard Peter's words, he fell down dead. The young men who were present wound

up the body in the clothes it had worn, and buried it.

About three hours afterwards, Sapphira, not knowing what had happened, came to the house. She lied like her husband, shared the same fate, and was buried beside him. Great fear came upon all who heard these things.

Many persons think lightly of lying, but it is a great sin. Trying to deceive in any way is quite as wicked. It is not said that Ananias spoke a single word, but he *acted a lie*. The judgment that fell so swiftly upon him and his wife was a merciful warning to others. Ever since it has helped to check lying.

Acts iv. 32-37. v. 1-11.

The Apostles Imprisoned.—Every day the apostles boldly preached in the temple, and wrought many miracles. Sick people were laid in the street along which Peter passed, that his shadow might fall on them for their cure. Numbers of sick people were also brought in from the country around. Multitudes, both men and women, believed.

Caiaphas, the high priest, and other Sadducees, angry at this, caused the apostles to be seized and put in the common prison. At night, God sent an angel to open the prison door, and tell the apostles to go on teaching in the temple. Early next morning they went to the temple, and spoke to the people as before.

When the Council met, officers were sent to bring the prisoners. They returned saying, that they found the prison shut, and the guards standing outside; but when the doors were opened, no one was within. The high priest and those with him did not know what to think of this; but they were soon told that the men whom they had shut up were teaching in the temple. The officers were ordered

to bring the apostles quietly to the Council. When they were set before them, the high priest asked the apostles why they did not stop teaching as they had been strictly commanded. Peter said, "We ought to obey God rather than man." He also said that Jesus, whom they slew, was exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. The priests were so angry at this, that they began to consult about putting them to death.

Gamaliel then stood up. He was a Pharisee, a doctor of the law, highly esteemed by the people. He ordered the apostles to be taken out for a little. When this was done, he cautioned the priests to let the apostles alone.

By examples he showed that false teachers were short-lived, and that their followers were soon scattered. "If this work be of men," said he, "it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it."

The Council agreed to what Gamaliel said, but they caused the apostles to be beaten, and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus.

The apostles left the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the sake of Jesus; but they taught more than ever, going from house to house.

The power of the Roman emperors was exerted in vain to check the progress of Christianity. It has shown itself to be from God. Acts v. 12-42.

The First Christian Martyr*.—Multitudes became Christians. Some of them, foreign Jews who spoke Greek, were called "Grecians." Others were "Hebrews," Jews of Palestine speaking their

* *Martyr* means *witness*. One who by his death bear *witness* to the truth; one who suffers for his belief.

own language. The foreign Jews thought that their widows did not receive their proper share of the alms distributed by the apostles. The apostles then proposed that seven well-known, good men should be appointed to attend to the poor. This pleased the disciples, and seven were chosen, all of whom have Greek names.

Stephen, one of the seven, did many wonders, and spoken with great power and wisdom. Among those who disputed with him were foreign Jews. Some of them were Libertines, Jews once Roman slaves who had got their freedom; others were from Africa and Asia Minor. Unable to withstand Stephen, they got false witnesses to accuse him before the Council, of speaking against the temple and the law of Moses.

Stephen stood boldly before the Council,—his face looking like that of an angel. In a long address he described the past history of the Jews; he showed that Moses had spoken of Jesus; that their forefathers had persecuted the prophets, and that they themselves had been the betrayers and murderers of the just One, the promised Messiah. The members of the Council were cut to the heart when they heard these things, and gnashed on Stephen with their teeth. He, looking up steadfastly to heaven, said, "I see the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." This is a figurative expression, denoting that Jesus was raised to the highest honour in heaven. Upon this, they cried out, and stopped their ears to prevent them from hearing such words. Then they all ran upon him, cast him out of the city, and stoned him. Stoning was the severest punishment among the Jews, and was used for blasphemy,—speaking against God or holy things. Before stoning, the witnesses took off their

upper clothing. In this case it was laid at the feet of a young man, called Saul.

Stephen first said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." When he had said this, he died so peacefully that it is only said, "he fell asleep."

Stephen was the first of the "noble army" of Christian martyrs. In death he showed the same spirit as his master who prayed for His murderers.

Acts vi, vii.

The Gospel in Samaria.—The death of Stephen was followed by a great persecution of the disciples. Saul went from house, to house dragging men and women to prison. The chief priests hoped in this way to root out Christianity, but the means employed only caused it to spread more widely. The Gospel was first to be preached in Jerusalem; afterwards it was to be proclaimed among all nations. Hitherto the disciples had clustered too much about Jerusalem; persecution scattered them, and wherever they went, they made known the word.

Philip, one of the seven, went to a city of Samaria, where he preached Christ, and wrought many miracles. Numbers believed, and there was great joy in the city. A man, called Simon, a sorcerer, or magician, had great influence among the people. They thought that he could do wonders by means of his charms, although he was only a cunning juggler. After seeing miracles wrought by Philip, Simon was baptized, like many others before him.

The apostles remained in Jerusalem. On hearing that so many in Samaria had received the word, they sent to them Peter and John. The apostles laid their hands on the new converts, who received the Holy Ghost in answer to their prayers. When

Simon saw this, he offered money to the apostles to secure the power of imparting the Holy Ghost. Peter told him that his heart was not right in God's sight, and urged him to repent, as he was still in his sins. The apostles preached in several Samaritan villages, and afterwards returned to Jerusalem.

Acts viii. 1-25.

Philip and the Eunuch.—The offer of the Gospel to the Samaritans was a widening of the message which had hitherto been confined to the Jews. It was followed by another occurrence in the same direction. Philip, who had been the chief agent in the movement in Samaria, was directed by an angel to go south, by the road through the desert from Jerusalem to Gaza. A eunuch of Ethiopia, treasurer to Candace, queen of that country, was a Jewish proselyte. He had been attending one of the feasts in Jerusalem, and was returning to his own country. As he sat in his chariot, he read the prophecy of Isaias, or Isaiah. Philip, directed by the Spirit of God, ran towards the chariot, and asked the eunuch if he understood what he was reading. "How can I," said he, "except some man should guide me?" He then desired Philip to come up into the chariot and sit with him. He had been reading of some one being "led as a sheep to the slaughter" (Isaiah liii. 7, 8), and he wished to know if the prophet was speaking of himself or of some other man. Philip, taking up that passage, preached unto him Jesus, as "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world."

When they came to some water, the eunuch asked if any thing hindered his being baptized. Philip replied, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." The eunuch said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Philip then baptized him.

The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more; but he went on his way rejoicing.

Ethiopia lay to the south of Egypt. It had a line of queens, called Candace, as the Egyptian kings were called Pharaoh. Part of it is included in Abyssinia, in which a corrupt form of Christianity has existed for many centuries. The eunuch probably first carried the Gospel to Africa.

Philip was found at Azotus, about twenty miles north of Gaza. Acts viii. 26-40.

The Conversion of Paul.—Saul was born at Tarsus, a city on the Cydnus, the capital of the province of Cilicia, in the south-east of Asia Minor. He belonged to a pure Jewish family, very strict Pharisees. He was brought up to the trade of tent-making, one of the chief manufactures of Cilicia. All the Jews learned some trade. It was a saying among them, that the father who did not teach his son a trade, taught him to steal. He received his early education at Tarsus. Besides studying Hebrew, Saul, either then or afterwards, acquired some knowledge of Greek literature. Three times he quotes from Greek poets.

When about thirteen, Saul was sent to Jerusalem, the Holy City, where he was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, the famous doctor of the law. Saul was clever, a hard student, and took a high place among the scholars of Gamaliel. A bigoted Pharisee, he bitterly hated the Christians. He approved of the stoning of Stephen, and watched the clothes of the witnesses.

Paul's persecution of the disciples in Jerusalem has already been mentioned. Being "exceedingly mad" against them, he wished to follow them wherever they went. Many had fled to Damascus, an

ancient populous city in Syria, about 120 miles north-east of Jerusalem. Saul got letters from the high priest, giving him authority to bring any Christians he might find at Damascus bound to Jerusalem. The Council claimed the same power over Jews in foreign countries which they had in Palestine.

When Saul was nearing Damascus, suddenly at noon, a light, brighter than the sun, shone upon the company, and all fell to the ground. Then a voice was heard, though only Saul understood the words. He was asked, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Paul replied, "Who art Thou, Lord?" The voice answered, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest!" Jesus looked upon Saul's cruel conduct to the disciples as done to Himself. Trembling and astonished to find that he had been persecuting the followers of the Messiah, Saul humbly asked, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The answer was, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

When Saul stood up and opened his eyes, he was blind. He groped about, until his companions saw that he had lost his sight, and then they led him by the hand to Damascus. Saul was blind for three days, and neither did eat nor drink. Through a disciple, named Ananias, his sight was restored. After receiving baptism, Saul immediately began preaching in Damascus that Christ is the Son of God.

The change which took place in Saul is called his *conversion*. The literal meaning of the word is turning round from one direction to another. If a man walking in the path of sin, turns decisively in the opposite direction, saying, "Father, I have sinned," such a man is converted. He was going to hell; he is now going to heaven. Acts ix. 1-22.

Cornelius, the First Gentile Convert.—Peter had gone to Joppa, now called Jaffa, the sea-port of Jerusalem. Up till this time the Jews were somewhat like caste Hindus; they would not keep company or eat with Gentiles, looking upon them as *mlechchas*, or unclean. If any Gentiles wished to join the Church, it was thought that they must first be circumcised—must become Jews before they could become Christians.

One day, about noon, Peter went up on the house-top to pray. Afterwards he became very hungry, but the dinner was not yet ready. While waiting for food, he fell into a kind of dream. He saw something like a great sheet, let down from heaven, full of all kinds of beasts, birds, and creeping things. Then Peter heard a voice, saying, "Rise, kill and eat." Peter was surprised at this, for the Jews were very strict about eating, looking upon some animals as unclean. He therefore answered, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything unclean." Thrice a voice said to him, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common," and the great sheet was taken up again into heaven.

While Peter was wondering what this vision could mean, the Holy Spirit spoke to his mind, telling him to go with three men who were seeking him.

When Peter went down to the men, he asked them why they had come. They explained that they had been sent by Cornelius, a centurion. Cornelius was a devout Roman officer, stationed at Cæsarea, the chief city on the coast of Palestine, about 35 miles north of Joppa. Cornelius was a true "seeker after God." He did what was right, as far as he knew: but every day he prayed for more light. One afternoon, while he was praying, he

saw in a vision an angel, who told him to send for Peter at Joppa, who would tell him what to do. He therefore sent at once two of his servants, with a pious soldier who waited on him constantly.

Next day Peter went with the men. When he came to Cæsarea, he found Cornelius and his friends assembled to hear what he had to say. Peter told them that God had shown him that he ought not to call any man common or unclean. After hearing what Cornelius told him, Peter said that "God is no respecter of persons." When Peter had preached about Jesus, the Holy Spirit came down on all who heard the word, and Peter ordered them to be baptized.

These were the first fruits among the Gentiles, the beginning of a glorious harvest. Acts x.

PRAYER FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT.

O Spirit of the living God !

In all the fulness of Thy grace,
Where'er the foot of man hath trod,
Descend on our apostate race.

Give tongues of fire and hearts of love
To preach the reconciling word :
Give power and unction from above,
Whene'er the joyful sound is heard.

Be darkness, at Thy coming, light ;
Confusion, order in Thy path ;
Souls without strength inspire with might ;
Bid mercy triumph over wrath.

Baptize the nations ; far and nigh,
The triumphs of the cross record ;
The name of Jesus glorify,
Till every kindred call Him Lord.

J. Montgomery.

XIII. THE PLANTING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AMONG THE GENTILES.

ACTS Chaps. XIII—XXVIII.

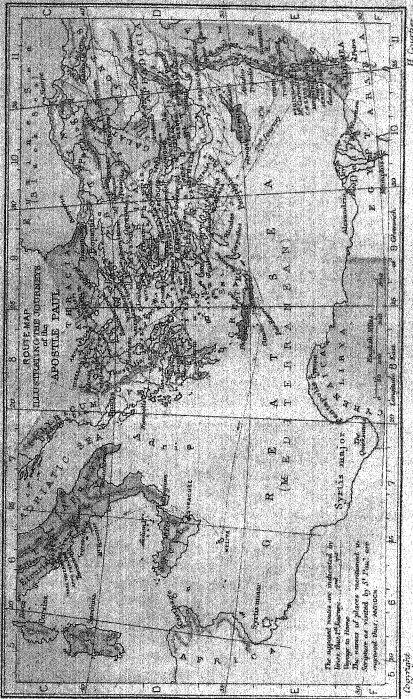
STATE OF THE WORLD.—Before giving an account of the first foreign missions of the Christian Church, a glance may be taken at the field to be entered upon. The *political* condition the world was a preparation for the Gospel, while its *moral* condition showed its necessity.

The Roman Empire was the greatest the world ever saw. It extended from the Atlantic to the Euphrates, and from the snows of Sarmatia to the Libyan desert. The Mediterranean was a Roman lake. Other empires have exceeded it in territory and population, but there never has been a second empire which so united in itself all the cultivated nations of its time. Rome was situated in the centre of the central sea of the ancient world. From this point the world, known to the ancients, was conquered and controlled. When the republic ended, the conquest of the world was substantially accomplished. Then began the fusion of the heterogeneous mass of countries and peoples, which at first were only externally united. The wide-spread peace consequent upon the subjection of so many nations to a common government, afforded facilities for travel and intercourse. The consolidation of so large a part of mankind in one political body tended to break up local prejudices, and to awaken a kind of cosmopolitan feeling. A net-work of roads extended from Rome to every part of the empire, like so many cords binding the conquered world to the centre. Merchant ships covered the Mediterranean.

The Roman Empire thus afforded great facilities for the spread of the Gospel. A single government prevented national wars which would have rendered impossible the free and frequent passage of missionaries from country to country. The cosmopolitan feeling, more or less awakened, was some preparation for the universal spiritual kingdom which was sought to be established. The Roman highways were travelled by messengers of the cross, and an Alexandrian ship, bound to Rome with corn, afforded a passage to the Apostle Paul.

The spread of the Greek language was another advantage. This language, adapted from its richness to express religious truth, was no less adapted to transmit it in consequence of its universality. The conquest of Greece by Rome only extended its influence. The victories of the imperial city carried the Greek tongue to all countries washed by the Mediterranean. The New Testament was written in Greek, and wherever the apostles of Christianity travelled, they were able to make themselves understood in that language.

The Roman Emperors had no wish to promote the spread of Christianity. Till the time of Constantine, they rather exerted their power to check its progress. The British Government, without intending it, is similarly preparing the way for the Gospel in India. Formerly the country was divided into numerous states, frequently at war with one another, preventing free communication. Now all can travel without hindrance from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. Roads, railways, and steam vessels, afford facilities for moving about, never possessed before. The English language is tending powerfully to weld together educated men of different nationalities. India is the great seat of caste, split-



ting up its races into small sections, regarding each other with mutual jealousy. Ideas of the "brotherhood of man" are gradually being diffused, hastening on the time when all shall be one body in Christ.

Some remarks may be made about the religious system of ancient Europe. The old Aryans, when they lived together in Central Asia, worshipped the same gods. The Eastern Aryans, after coming to India, gradually gave up the Vedic gods, and adopted those of the Purānas. Eighteen centuries ago, the Western Aryans retained several of the deities of their forefathers.

The chief god in ancient Europe was by the Greeks called Zeupater, and by the Romans, Jupiter. He was the Dyaus pitar of the Vedas. As Jupiter Pluvius, the rain god, he corresponded with Indra. Ignis, fire, was the Vedic Agni. Juno was the wife of Jupiter. Among his sons were Apollo, the sun god, the Vedic Surya; Vulcan, the artificer of the gods, the Vedic Tvashtri; and Mercury, the messenger of the gods. Among his daughters were Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, and Diana, the goddess of hunting. Venus was the goddess of beauty. Uranus corresponded with Varuna, and Bacchus, the god of wine, with Soma.

The supposed gods of the Greeks and Romans behaved very much like those of the Hindus. They quarrelled and fought with each other, and were guilty of all kinds of crime. "As is the god so is worshipper." Since Jupiter was notorious for his adulteries, why might not a mortal give way to the same vice?

The moral condition of the world also showed the need of the Gospel. For thousands of years things had only been becoming worse and worse. In Rome, luxurious eating was carried to

the most disgusting excesses. Dishes were prepared of the brains of peacocks and the tongues of nightingales. To support such luxury, men asked the government of provinces for the sole purpose of enriching themselves by extortion. It is estimated that there were sixty millions of slaves in the Roman Empire, passing from a childhood of degradation to a manhood of hardship, and an old age of unpitied neglect. Only a little above the slaves stood the lower classes of free-born inhabitants. Despising a life of honest industry, they asked only for bread and the games of the circus. The love of cruel sports was carried to a terrible height. Sulla had made himself popular by exhibiting a combat where a hundred men fought with a hundred lions; Julius Cæsar presented a show where there fought three hundred couples of gladiators; Trajan, one of the best of the Roman emperors, put ten thousand men into the arena, who continued for four months to soak the sand with their blood.

The age was characterised by its unbounded self-indulgence; its coarse and tasteless luxury; its greedy avarice; its sense of insecurity and terror; its apathy, debauchery, and cruelty; its hopeless fatalism; its unspeakable sadness and weariness; its strange extravagances, alike of infidelity and of superstition. The emperor was deified even in his life-time, and had temples erected to his honour in which sacrifices were offered. He might be at once a priest, an atheist, and a god.

"It was hard to say which was the most abandoned—the multitude who still adored divinities the patrons of every crime, or the scholars who laughed at superstition, and perpetrated crimes worthy of a Mars or Jupiter." A dark but faithful

picture of the times will be found in the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

The south of Britain had recently been conquered by the Romans, and was held in subjection by camps studded over the country. Towns ending in *chester** indicate their position. The north of Scotland was never subdued. Amid the forests to the north and east of the Danube, there dwelt rude tribes, which had defied the Roman arms, and were destined, five hundred years later, to pour fresh blood into the decaying empire.

Parthia was then a powerful state, extending from the Euphrates to the Indus. Buddhism was the dominant religion in India, although Brahmanism had many followers. In China, as at present, the worship of ancestors was the prevailing superstition.

Muhammad was not born till 570 A. D., and America was not discovered till 1492.

Such was the state of the world which Paul set out to conquer.

Paul's First Missionary Journey.—Antioch, the capital of Syria, stood on the Orontes, about 300 miles north of Jerusalem. In the times of the apostles, it ranked third among the cities of the Roman Empire. The proclamation of the Gospel at Antioch had been followed by large and sudden success. Barnabas, who was sent to labour there, brought Paul from Tarsus to assist him. Here the name of "Christian," originally a term of reproach, was first given to the disciples.

The Gospel, hitherto confined to the Jews, was now to be made known to all nations. The Holy Ghost appointed Barnabas and Saul for this work,

* From *castrum*, a camp.

the first missionaries to the heathen. After fasting and prayer, they left for Cyprus, the birth-place of Barnabas. The island was notorious for the worship of Venus, the goddess of beauty, celebrated with infamous rites. Sergius Paulus, the Roman Governor, sent for Paul and Barnabas to hear the word of God. A belief in magic was very common in those days. A Jew, named Barjesus, but who called himself *Elymas*, sorcerer, withstood the apostles, denying the truth of their statements. Saul rebuked him sternly for his wickedness, and said that he should be blind for a time. Elymas then groped about for some one to lead him. The Governor, astonished at what he had seen and heard, believed.

After this the Hebrew name, Saul, *asked for*, is exchanged for the Greek name, Paul, *little*.

From Cyprus, Paul and Barnabas sailed northward to Asia Minor, and preached in different cities. They went first to the synagogues to speak to the Jews, but most of them would not listen. The apostles told them that, as they had rejected the Gospel, it should be offered to the Gentiles. When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and many believed. The Jews, angry at such a result, stirred up a persecution against the apostles, and they went to Lystra, in Lycaonia, a province north of Cilicia. There Paul said to a lame man, "Stand upright on thy feet," and he leaped and walked. The people cried out, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men." Barnabas they named Jupiter, and Paul, Mercury, the messenger of the gods. The priests brought garlands and oxen to offer sacrifice before the apostles. Paul and Barnabas ran in among the people to stop them, and besought them to turn from these

vain idols to the living God, who had given them rain and fruitful seasons.

The fickle multitude, who had first proposed to worship the apostles, being stirred up by Jews from other cities, ended by stoning Paul. Supposed to be dead, he was dragged out of the city, and left to be eaten by the birds and dogs. When the disciples gathered around him, he revived, and walked back into the city.

After encouraging the disciples and appointing elders in every church, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, where they gave an account of their journey. Acts xiii, xiv.

The First Christian Council.—For more than fourteen centuries, circumcision and other commands of the Mosaic law had been observed by the Jews. Some of them, even after they became Christians, thought they ought still to be obeyed, and that they were binding on all Gentiles who received the Gospel. They themselves still attended the temple worship; they prayed at the stated hours, and dressed in the style of the Jewish ritual. They expected the Messiah to be the hero of their own nation; their conception of His reign was a world of Jews. Grieved at the reports of the conversion of the Gentiles without becoming Jews, some men from Jerusalem told the disciples at Antioch that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised.

To settle this question, it was determined that Paul, Barnabas, and some others, should go to Jerusalem, and consult with the apostles. A large meeting was held. After several had spoken, Peter reminded them that by his mouth, a good while ago, some of the Gentiles had believed, and had received the Holy Ghost, without first becoming Jews. He

asked them why they should tempt God to put a yoke upon the Gentiles, which neither they nor their fathers could bear. Paul and Barnabas then gave an account of the success which had attended their ministry among the Gentiles. After they had finished, James, "the Lord's brother," said that the Gentiles ought not to be troubled with Jewish rites; only they were to abstain from idolatry, from fornication, and some customs which the Jews disliked.

The apostles and elders at Jerusalem sent Barnabas and Silas, two chief men, with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, giving them a letter stating that it was not needful for Gentile Christians to keep the law of Moses. (Acts xv. 23-29). This letter gave great joy to all who heard it.

The dispute, however, long continued to trouble the early disciples. Wherever Paul founded churches throughout the Gentile world, the Judaizing Christians sought to persuade the converts that Paul had not brought to them the true Gospel, but that they ought to be circumcised.

One of the books of the New Testament, the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, was afterwards written, primarily for believing Jews, to show the superiority of the Christian dispensation to that of Moses, which was only a shadow of good things to come.

Acts xv.

Paul's Second Missionary Journey.—After a short time spent in Antioch, Paul proposed to Barnabas that they should visit the churches they had planted. They had a dispute about Mark going with them; so Barnabas went to Cyprus with Mark, and Paul left for Asia Minor with Silas. At Lystra, Paul was joined by a good young man, named Timothy. Paul went for the first time into Galatia, an inland district. Its inhabitants

originally came from Gaul, now called France. The Galatians received the Gospel gladly ; but they were soon perverted by Judaizing teachers, and Paul rebuked them sharply in the Epistle addressed to them.

The Gospel First Preached in Europe.—Paul wished to visit some of the large cities in the west of Asia Minor, then called Asia ; but he was forbidden by the Holy Ghost. He went to Troas, on the coast, which preserves the name of Troy, famous for its ten years' siege by the Greeks. There, for the first time in his life, Paul, looking across the Hellespont, saw the blue summits of the European mountains. He had a vision of a man who prayed, saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." That figure represented Europe, and its cry for help Europe's need of Christ. Paul recognised this as a divine summons to Europe. A fourth companion went with him—Luke, the writer of the third Gospel and Acts. Two days' sail brought them to the coast of Europe. The first place at which they stayed was Philippi, the chief city in that part of Macedonia.

Philippi was so called by Philip, the father of Alexander the Great. It was the first place in Europe in which the Gospel was preached. There was no synagogue ; but devout Jews and proselytes met in a small building for prayer by the river side. At the first Christian service held there, the heart of Lydia was opened to receive the truth. She was a seller of purple, from Thyatira, in Asia Minor. She believed and was baptized with all her house.

"Christianity arose in Asia and among an Oriental people ; and it might have been expected to spread first among those races to which the Jews were most akin. Instead of coming west, it might

have gone eastwards. Had it done so, missionaries from India and Japan might have been coming to England at the present day to tell the story of the cross."* Acts xv. 36-41. xvi. 1-15.

The Great Question Answered.—A slave girl at Philippi brought much gain to her masters by soothsaying. An evil spirit in her made her say strange things, that people might think her a prophetess. Many consulted her about their fortunes, for which they paid money. When she saw Paul and his companions, she used to cry out, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show us the way of salvation." Paul, grieved, commanded the spirit to come out of her; but the selfish men who owned her were angry, because no more money could be made by her. They caught Paul and Silas, and brought them to the magistrates, accusing them as Jews of teaching new unlawful customs. The magistrates, without inquiring whether the charge was true or false, ordered Paul and Silas to be beaten with rods. With their backs all bleeding, they were sent to prison, where their feet were made fast in the stocks.

At midnight, Paul and Silas sang praises to God. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. Immediately all the doors were opened, and the chains fastening the prisoners were loosed. The jailor awoke in great fear, and supposing that the prisoners had got away, drew his sword to kill himself. According to Roman law, he would have been put to death if the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried, "Do thyself no harm; for we are all here." The jailor called for a light, came in trembling, and

* Stalker's *Life of St. Paul*.

fell down before Paul and Silas, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He felt that he was sinful, and he was sure that these two men were God's servants. The answer to the jailor's question was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." After the jailor and his family heard more about Jesus, they believed and were baptized. Next morning the magistrates gave Paul and Silas leave to go away; but Paul charged them with having acted contrary to law, and asked them to come and fetch them. The magistrates therefore came to the prison, and asked them to leave the city.

A flourishing Christian Church was formed at Philippi, to which Paul addressed one of his epistles.

The jailor's question is the most important that can be asked. Paul gave the true answer. "There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts xvi. 16-46.

Paul at Athens.—Paul, travelling westward along the great Roman road, came to Thessalonica, a large trading city on the coast. Great numbers of the Greeks were baptized. This made the unbelieving Jews very angry, and they raised such an uproar that the disciples sent Paul and Silas away by night. Paul afterwards sent two letters to the Christians at Thessalonica. They are the first writings of the apostle which we possess.

Paul afterwards went to Athens. In ancient times it was the most famous city in the world for its philosophers, orators, painters, and sculptors. Minerva was the patron goddess. A magnificent temple, called the Parthenon, was dedicated to her, with a colossal image of the goddess, armed with shield and spear. Idols were so numerous that it was said to be easier to find a god than a man in the city.

Paul's spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. He went to the synagogue and spoke with the Jews, and every day he talked with people in the public place, where idlers met to hear or tell of any new thing. Among those who heard Paul were some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. The followers of Epicurus did not believe in a Creator; they taught that the soul dies with the body, and that man's chief happiness lies in worldly pleasure. The Stoics pretended to be insensible to all the joys and sorrows of life. Some of the philosophers called Paul a "babbler," expressive of their contempt at an unknown foreigner presuming to teach learned men. Others said that he was a setter forth of strange gods. Wishing to hear of the new doctrine, they brought Paul to Areopagus,* or Mars' Hill, the place where the chief court of Athens was held.

Paul began his address by acknowledging that the Athenians were very religious. He said that when going about he had seen an altar with the inscription, To THE UNKNOWN GOD. The Athenians thus confessed that there was a God whom they did not know, and He was the God whom Paul preached. Looking at the splendid Parthenon, Paul taught that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands. He is the Creator of all things, and does not need any thing from us. He has made all men of one blood, and wishes them to seek after Him, and find Him. God gave us life, and sustains us in life. As some Greek poets have said, "We are also His offspring." The Athenians were proud of the beautiful statues of their gods, but Paul

* *Ares* is the Greek for *Mars*, the god of war. *Pagos* means hill. Mars is said to have been here tried by other gods on a charge of murder.

declared that the Godhead is not like to gold, silver or stone formed into images.

After teaching the "Fatherhood of God" and the "brotherhood of man," Paul said that the times of ignorance God had overlooked, but now He commanded all men everywhere to repent. He also spoke of a coming judgment, of which God had given a pledge by raising Jesus Christ from the dead. When they heard of the resurrection, some mocked, and others said, "We will hear thee again of this matter." However, Dionysius, one of the judges of the court of Areopagus, and some others believed.

"The world by wisdom knew not God." The Gospel was to the Athenian Greeks "foolishness."

Paul next went to Corinth, on the isthmus joining the southern peninsula of Greece with the mainland. It was a great commercial city, but so notorious for its licentiousness that it passed into a proverb. Paul remained here a year and a half, and many believed. Two of his longest epistles are addressed to the Corinthian church. He afterwards went on a visit to Jerusalem. Acts xvii, xviii.

Paul at Ephesus.—Paul set out from Antioch on his third missionary journey. After visiting some of the churches he had planted, and strengthening the disciples, he came to Ephesus. This was a large city in the west of Asia Minor, famous for its temple of Diana, considered one of the seven wonders of the world. It had been 220 years in building. Its roof was supported by 127 pillars, 60 feet high, the gifts of as many kings. The Ephesian Diana was different from the Diana of the Greeks and Romans. Her image, believed to have fallen from heaven, was rudely made of wood, and covered with female breasts. She corresponded with the Hindu Sakti.

The population of Ephesus was half Greek, half Asiatic. It was a very wealthy, but licentious city.

Paul, besides preaching at Ephesus, wrought many miracles. The city swarmed with magicians, exorcists, and fortune tellers. The sons of Sceva, a Jew, tried to cast out an evil spirit as Paul did; but the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped upon them, and they fled, naked and wounded. Many even of the magicians became disciples. They brought their books of magic, and burnt them openly, the value of them being 50,000 pieces of silver.

People who came to worship in the temple, wished to carry away images of the goddess or of the shrine. Thus many silversmiths got a living. One of them, named Demetrius, began to fear that he would lose his business through Paul's preaching against idolatry and the people becoming Christians. When he explained this to his fellow-workmen, they were very angry, and went about shouting, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" The whole city was in an uproar. Paul could not be found, but two of his companions were caught and taken into the theatre, a large building in which public meetings were held. When Paul wished to go in, his friends would not allow him, lest he should be torn in pieces. Alexander, a Jew, tried to speak; but the mob would not hear him, and kept shouting for two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

At last the chief magistrate quieted them. He told them that there was no need of their outcry, for every one knew that Diana was great. If Demetrius and the other silversmiths had a case against any one, it should be decided by law. He advised them to be quiet, and go home.

As it was dangerous to remain in Ephesus, Paul

left the city. One of his epistles is addressed to the Ephesian Christians. Acts xix.

Return to Jerusalem.—Paul next visited the churches in Macedonia and Greece. On his way to Jerusalem, he stopped for a short time at different places. When preaching at Troas, a young man, named Eutychus, heavy with sleep, fell through a window from the third story, and was taken up dead. Through Paul, he was restored to life. From Miletus, on the coast, Paul sent for the elders of the Church at Ephesus, to bid them farewell. They wept sore at parting, sorrowing most for the words which he spoke—that they should see his face no more.

At Tyre, when Paul was going away, all the Christians went with him to the shore, where they kneeled down and prayed. At Cæsarea, Paul stayed with Philip, one of the seven. Agabus, a prophet from Judea, told Paul that at Jerusalem he would be bound and delivered to the Gentiles. When his friends, weeping, begged him not to go there, he said that he was ready not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

At Jerusalem, Paul was kindly received by James and the elders, to whom he gave an account of what God had done among the Gentiles. It was the feast of Pentecost, and some Jews from Ephesus saw Paul in the temple. When they falsely charged him with polluting it, this excited the rage of the people, and they tried to kill Paul. Lysias, the Roman captain, then came with a number of soldiers, and rescued him. He ordered Paul to be bound with two chains, and taken to the castle. Paul asked leave to speak to the people; but after hearing his history, they cried out, "Away with such a fellow; for it is not fit that he should live."

Next day, Lysias brought Paul before the chief priests and council to be examined. They were so furious, that Lysias was afraid that Paul would be torn in pieces. He therefore made his soldiers bring Paul back to the castle. Forty Jews bound themselves by an oath not to eat or drink till they had killed Paul. When Lysias heard of this, he sent away Paul by night, under a strong guard of soldiers, with a letter to Felix, the Roman governor, who resided at Cæsarea. Acts xx-xxiii.

Paul at Cæsarea.—Cæsarea was a splendid city on the coast, built by Herod the Great, and so called in honour of the Roman Emperor. Felix, the Governor, originally a slave, was notorious for his profligacy and cruelty. His wife at this time was Drusilla, daughter of Herod Agrippa I., whom he had enticed away from her husband.

After five days the high priest and elders came to Cæsarea, with an orator, named Tertullus, to accuse Paul before Felix. Tertullus, after flattering Felix, charged Paul with sedition and heresy. The Jews present asserted that what he had spoken was true. Paul, when called upon by Felix to make his defence, denied the charges, and gave an account of his life and arrest. Felix felt that Paul was innocent; but to please his accusers, he did not set him at liberty. He also hoped to get money for releasing him.

Drusilla, the wife of Felix, a Jewess, wished to hear about the new doctrine which Paul preached. Felix sent for Paul, and as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled. Conscience accused him of the many crimes he had committed, and he might well be terrified at the account he would have to give. Felix silenced the voice of conscience by a promise

of future consideration. He sent away Paul, saying, "When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." It was *never* "convenient" to repent of his sins and turn to God. His heart became only the more hardened. He sent frequently for Paul again; but it was in the hope of getting money to set him free. Many, like Felix, put off attention to religion till it is too late, and die without hope.

Felix was recalled on account of his misgovernment. Drusilla and her son by Felix perished in the eruption from Mount Vesuvius.

Festus, another governor, succeeded Felix. As soon as he came to Jerusalem, the high priest and the Jews asked him to send Paul to Jerusalem, that they might kill him on the way. Festus refused this, and asked his accusers to come to Cæsarea. The charges brought could not be proved; but Festus, to please the Jews, asked Paul if he was willing to go to Jerusalem to be tried. Upon this Paul claimed his right as a Roman citizen, and said, "I appeal unto Cæsar." Festus did not know what kind of a charge could be made against Paul when sent to Rome as a prisoner. Agrippa II., brother of Drusilla, came with his sister Bernice on a visit to Cæsarea. Festus, knowing that Agrippa was acquainted with Jewish customs, consulted him about Paul. Agrippa, Bernice, and Festus came with great pomp to the audience hall, and Paul was brought before them in chains. Paul gave an account of his life, and explained how he had become a Christian. Agrippa, the last of the Herods, did not care for Paul's address to him, but said that he might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to Cæsar.

Acts xxiv-xxvi.

The Voyage to Italy.—Festus sent Paul and other prisoners on board a ship, with some soldiers,

to go to Rome. Luke went with Paul. They had to go first to Asia Minor to find a ship bound for Italy. When they got to Crete, the stormy season was coming on, and Paul advised that they should stay there till winter was over; but the master of the ship wished to go to another port, more convenient. Soon after they set sail, a great storm came on, and the ship was driven before the wind. The vessel had a cargo of wheat, brought from Alexandria, which the sailors threw overboard to lighten her. For fourteen days they were driven up and down the part of the Mediterranean between Greece and Sicily, anciently called the Sea of Adria. Sailors in those days were guided by the sun, moon, and stars, but during all that time they could not be seen. When they had lost all hope, Paul, cheered by a vision, told them that they should all be saved.

About midnight, the sailors knew that they were getting near land, and cast out anchors to prevent the vessel going on the rocks. Paul then encouraged them to take some food. When daylight came, they tried to get into a small creek; but the ship ran aground, while the hinder part was broken by the waves. Some swam on shore; others escaped on broken parts of the ship: not one was lost.

The island on which they were cast was Melita, now Malta. The little creek is called St. Paul's Bay. The inhabitants are called "barbarians," a name given by the Greeks to persons who did not understand their language. They kindled a fire, and were kind to the shipwrecked strangers. A poisonous snake fastened on Paul's hand when throwing some wood on the fire. The natives thought that Paul was a murderer, and expected him to die; but when he shook off the snake un-

harméd, they said that he was a god. Paul cured the Governor's father of dysentery, and healed many others. After staying three months in the island, all went on board a ship bound for Italy, and Paul landed at Puteoli, the great port of Rome, near the modern Naples.

Acts xxvii. xxviii. 1-13.

Paul at Rome.—Rome was at this time the largest city in the world. Its population was about two millions, one half of whom were slaves. The public buildings and palaces were magnificent, but the city was a sink of iniquity. Nero, who had shortly before murdered his mother, was emperor.

It is not known by whom the Christian Church at Rome was founded. The longest Epistle of Paul, written from Corinth, is addressed to the Christians at Rome. He mentioned in it that he had often wished to preach the Gospel in Rome, but had been "let (hindered) hitherto." When the Christians at Rome heard that Paul had landed at Puteoli, some of them came to meet him as far as Appii Forum, others at The Three Taverns,—the former 43, the latter 33 miles from Rome. They saw a little grey-headed old man, a chained prisoner, but they received him as an ambassador of Jesus Christ. Paul "thanked God, and took courage."

At Rome the centurion delivered over the prisoners to the captain of the emperor's body-guard, who allowed Paul to live by himself in his own hired house, in charge of a soldier to whom he was chained.

Paul first sought to make known the Gospel to the Jews at Rome, some of whom believed and some believed not. Afterwards he laboured among the Gentiles, no one forbidding him. The church at Rome must have increased largely, for only a few

years later great numbers of Christians were put to death by Nero. Converts were made even in the palace. During his confinement, Paul wrote several of his epistles.

At last Paul's trial came on. From his epistles we learn that he was set free. It is generally supposed that from Rome he went to Asia Minor, and from that to Macedonia. He may have gone to Spain. Afterwards he visited Asia Minor and Crete. He hoped to spend the winter at Nicopolis in Macedonia (Titus iii. 12), but he was arrested on a new charge, and hurried to Rome to stand a second trial. Since he had been last at Rome, more than half the city had been burned. Nero laid the blame upon the Christians, who were now a numerous body. Some were crucified, some were exposed to wild beasts; some were covered with pitch, and set on fire at night as torches. Paul knew that he would be put to death. In his second Epistle to Timothy, the last which he wrote, he says, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

Paul was shortly after beheaded by Nero. What a noble career was that of Paul! He might have lived a life of ease and sin; but he chose rather one of toil and suffering in the cause of Christ, to be followed by an eternity of joy unspeakable and full of glory. May men be raised up in India to follow his example, and carry the Gospel to their countrymen!

Acts xxviii. 14-31.

SALVATION BY GRACE.

Not in any thing we do,
Thought that's pure, or word that's true,
Saviour, would we put our trust,
Frail as vapour, vile as dust,
All that flatters, we disown :
Righteousness is Thine alone.

Though we underwent for Thee
Perils of the land and sea,
Though we cast our lives away,
Dying for Thee day by day,
Boast we never of our own :
Grace and strength are Thine alone.

Native cumberers of the ground,
All our fruit from Thee is found :
Grafted in Thine olive, Lord,
New-begotten by Thy word,
All we have is Thine alone :
Life and power are not our own.

And when Thy returning voice
Calls Thy faithful to rejoice,
When the countless throng to Thee
Cast their crown of victory,
We will sing before the throne,
"Thine the glory, not our own!"

Alford.

XIV.—THE EPISTLES AND REVELATION.

Introduction.—"The sacred books of the Christian religion differ from all other sacred books in their form as well as in their contents. A large portion of them is composed of letters written by the chief teachers to the various Churches. The needs of the infant Church made this a necessity. Christianity was to be spread through all the world, and a very large step was made in its diffusion during the lifetime of St. Paul. But her chief

ministers were few in number for the work to which they went forth, while the newly-founded Churches were scattered through many provinces. It was therefore only by letters that the necessary counsel, guidance, instruction and exhortation could be dispensed to the various far distant congregations.”*

How to Read the Epistles.—The student of the Epistles should ascertain, if possible, by whom and for whom they were written ; what were the circumstances which suggested their composition ; what were the errors of belief or of practice, that they were designed to correct. Locke’s plan was to read a whole Epistle through at a sitting, and to observe as well as he could, the drift and design of the writer. “If the first reading (he says) gave me some light, the second gave me more ; and so I persisted on, reading constantly the whole Epistle over at once, till I came to have a good general view of the Apostle’s main purpose in writing the Epistle, the chief branches of his discourse, wherein he prosecuted it ; the arguments he used ; and the disposition of the whole.”

The reader is recommended to gain first a good knowledge of the Gospels. They are the parts of the New Testament the most easily understood, and the foundation of the whole. Acts should next be read, and afterwards the Epistles. Both throw light on each other. Many parts of the Epistles are plain ; others will require careful study, but they will repay it. While a good Commentary would be of much assistance, prayer for Divine help is above all necessary. A famous Christian writer says, “To have prayed well, is to have studied well.

* Lumby’s *Introduction to the New Testament*.

The Pauline Epistles.—Among the New Testament Epistles, those of St. Paul hold the foremost place. Leaving the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews an unsettled question, there yet remain thirteen letters sent forth by the zealous Apostle of the Gentiles in the space of what can have been little more than a dozen years. In their value to the Christian world, they are second only to the Gospels. They explain, as far as possible, what Christian men should believe of the counsels of God, of the Person of Christ, of the Work of Redemption, of the operation of the Holy Spirit.

The Churches addressed by Paul were composed of two elements—Jews and Gentiles. Among some of the former there was a tendency to cling to the Mosaic dispensation. Paul's bitterest enemies were Judaizing teachers. The Epistles contain many cautions against them. The Gentiles, on the other hand, were apt to relapse into the sins in which they indulged as heathen. Hence Paul had to correct the errors into which the Churches or some of them fell, and to condemn the evil practices into which some of them had been betrayed. He had also to comfort the brethren under affliction and persecution, and to stimulate them to steadfastness and fidelity.

The style of the apostle Paul is peculiar. "His reasoning takes occasionally the form of an argument within an argument. He pauses by the way to expand some thought, and does not return again to complete in grammatical form the sentence which he had begun; so that his style sometimes becomes complex and obscure." Either from defective eyesight or some other failing, Paul's Epistles were generally dictated. They begin with greetings, and

end with salutations. His own signature was added as a mark of genuineness.

The Epistles of Paul are not placed in the New Testament according to the order in which they were written. The principle of arrangement seems to have been, first, those to Churches, then, those to individuals. Their length was another consideration. The Epistle to the Romans stands first, because it is the largest. Another reason in this case may have been, because Rome was the chief city of the empire. Two epistles addressed to the same Church are placed together. The Epistle to the Hebrews does not bear the name of the writer. Some ascribe it to Paul, but as this is not known positively, it is placed at the end of his epistles.

The following is the chronological order of Paul's Epistles as far as it can be ascertained. As they are not dated, some uncertainty exists with regard to several of them :—

Paul's Second Missionary Journey. 52, 53 A.D.

1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey. 55—60 A.D.

1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans.

Paul's First Imprisonment at Rome. 61—63 A.D.

Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians.

Paul set at liberty. 64—65 A.D.

1 Timothy, Titus.

Paul's Second Imprisonment at Rome. 66, 67 A.D.

2 Timothy.

The notes at the end of the Epistles, mentioning where they were written, do not belong to them, and are not always correct.

Each of the Epistles, will now be very briefly noticed. Many volumes would be required to explain them fully.

Romans.—The Church at Rome was probably founded by the "strangers of Rome" who were in

Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 10. Though composed chiefly of Gentile converts, it had also a Jewish element.

Paul had often purposed to visit Rome, but had been as often hindered, Romans i. 13. To make up in part for this failure, he wrote the present Epistle from Corinth, and sent it by Phebe, a servant of the Church at Cenchrea, the eastern port of Corinth. It was written about A.D. 58, during the apostle's third missionary journey, when he was about to leave for Jerusalem. Acts xx. 2, 3. Rom. xv. 25.

The Epistle to the Romans contains the most complete exposition of Christian doctrine found in the New Testament, and deserves most careful study.

It begins with a short preface (Chap. i. 1-17), and ends with concluding remarks and salutations. (Chaps. xv. xvi.) The Epistle consists of two main divisions (1) Doctrinal, Chaps. i-xi., and (2) Practical, Chaps. xii-xv, 1-13.

Paul first shows the *need of salvation* from the sinfulness of the human race. Chaps. i. 18 to iii. 20.

He assumes the principle that God will punish sin, and then proves that although the Gentiles possessed some knowledge of God, they did not worship Him, but turned to idols. They also were guilty of many other sins which their consciences condemned. Paul gives a dark but faithful picture of the Gentile world of his time, which applies, more or less, to the whole heathen world at present. i. 18-32.

Paul then shows that God will judge all men, Jews and Gentiles, according to their works and the light they possessed, and that the Jews, tried by these rules, are as justly and certainly exposed

to condemnation as the Gentiles. Mere knowledge increases guilt. ii. 1-29.

The conclusion drawn is that "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" and that hence it is impossible for any one to be saved through his supposed obedience to the law. iii. 1-20.

The Gospel plan of *salvation by faith* is next explained. The death of Jesus Christ reconciles the justice and mercy of God; salvation by faith without the works of the law, humbles man and excludes boasting, and saves all on the same terms. iii. 21-31.

It is shown that holy men of old, as Abraham and David, were justified by faith, and not by their good works. This therefore was God's *original* method. The conduct of Abraham is proposed as an example and encouragement to Christians. iv. 1-25.

The fruits of faith are peace, joy, and hope. The method by which sinners are saved is analogous to that by which they were first brought under condemnation. Death came through Adam; life comes through Jesus Christ. v.

Salvation by faith is *favourable to holiness*, instead of the reverse. When the Christian becomes the servant of Christ, he is brought under an influence which effectually secures his obedience. The law simply *convince*s of sin; the *destruction* of sin can only come through the grace of God in Christ Jesus. vi, vii.

Those who are in Christ are perfectly safe. They have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; they are the children of God, and the objects of His unchanging love. viii.

As the doctrine of the admission of the Gentiles to equal privileges with the Jews and the rejection

of the unbelieving part of the Jewish nation, was exceedingly offensive to his countrymen, Paul devotes three chapters (ix-xi) to the discussion of this point.

In chaps. xii-xv, he draws from the whole subject practical lessons with regard to daily life ; as entire consecration to God, obedience to magistrates, love and purity, mutual respect and forbearance. He closes with miscellaneous notices and salutations.*

Epistles to the Corinthians.—Corinth was a famous city of Greece, on the neck of land joining the southern peninsula with the continent. It was a place of great trade, and had two ports, one on the east side, called Cenchrea, and another on the west. The city was also notorious for its licentiousness. The patron goddess of the city was Venus, whose temple had a thousand prostitutes, like the *devadāsīs* of Southern India or the women dedicated to Khandoba in the Bombay Presidency.

The Christian Church was planted at Corinth by Paul, who came there from Athens, and remained a year and a half. Acts xviii. 1-17. The first Epistle was written from Ephesus, Acts xix. Paul had been asked to advise about marriage, meats offered to idols, the dress of women in public, the exercise of spiritual gifts, and collections for the poor. The apostle replies to these questions ; but also refers to certain abuses which had been reported to him ; as quarrels among themselves, a case of incest, disorder at love feasts, and the denial of the resurrection. He also strongly asserts his own authority.

The second Epistle was called for by the effect of the first. Paul had left Ephesus for Macedonia :

* Abridged from Hodge on Romans.

Titus brought him cheering news from Corinth. The majority of the Church had shown the deepest sorrow for their sins ; had obeyed the apostle's injunctions ; had expressed the warmest affection for him, and were earnestly desirous of seeing him once more. But some, under the influence of Judaizing teachers, disparaged the apostle, and the Church was yet not entirely free from immorality. Paul sent this letter, by Titus and two other brethren, to encourage the better portion, to expose false teachers, and to prepare the Church for his intended visit.

Galatians.—Galatia was an inland mountainous province of Asia Minor. It was so called from the Galli, a tribe from Europe, that settled in it. The Galli belonged to the Celtic race, the same as the French. Their great failing was fickleness. The Galatian churches were founded by Paul during his second journey. Acts xvi. 6. He was received with the greatest love. The converts would even have "plucked out their eyes," and given them to him. During his absence, under the influence of false teachers, they fell into serious errors, and denied his authority. When Paul knew this, he wished to visit Galatia ; but as he could not, he wrote a letter. He proves his authority as an Apostle ; he shows that justification is entirely by faith, and not by the deeds of the law ; and concludes with warnings and directions.

Ephesians.—Ephesus has already been noticed (page 141). Its inhabitants were very much like the Corinthians. Paul's first visit to Ephesus is recorded in Acts xviii. 1-21. It was short, but he remained three years during his second visit. Acts xx. 31. On his way to Jerusalem, he sent for the elders of the Church at Ephesus to bid them farewell.

Acts xx. 17. The Epistle was probably written when Paul was a prisoner at Rome. It may be divided into two parts. In the first three chapters the apostle breaks forth into a continued strain of thanksgiving for the blessings of the Gospel; in the latter half, various duties of the Christian life are inculcated, with an exhortation to watchfulness and fortitude.

Philippians.—The Philippian Church was founded by Paul and his companions during his second missionary journey, Acts xvi. 12. Of all the churches established by Paul, that at Philippi seems to have cherished the most tender concern for him. The Philippians twice sent him money for his support. The Epistle was written from Rome, where he was confined with more strictness than before. It overflows with affection, gratitude, and confidence. Paul gives news about his own condition, strengthens the Philippians under their heavy trials, and concludes with cautions, acknowledgment of kindnesses, and salutations.

Colossians.—Colosse was a chief city of Phrygia, an inland province of Asia Minor. The Church there does not seem to have been founded by Paul, (ii. 1). It was in danger of false teachers. Paul sent this letter by Tychicus during his first imprisonment at Rome. The same messenger carried the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the two letters strikingly resemble each other. The apostle enlarges on the perfection of Christ, in whom believers are complete; he cautions against vain inquiries and yielding to the ceremonial law; he gives general admonitions and precepts on relative duties; concluding with salutations and a benediction.

Thessalonians.—Thessalonica, now Saloniki, was the chief city in Macedonia, a large country to the

north of Greece. Next to Constantinople, it is still the largest seaport in European Turkey, and contains 30,000 Jews. The founding of the Church at Thessalonica by Paul is related in Acts xvii. 1-9. The two Epistles to this Church are the earliest writings of the apostle we possess, and the oldest portions of the New Testament. Both were written from Corinth. In the first Epistle he exhorts the Thessalonian Christians to grow in holiness, warns them against immoderate sorrow for brethren who died in the faith, and speaks of the second coming of Christ. The second letter was written a few months later, partly to correct an erroneous belief that the resurrection was near at hand, which led some to neglect their daily employment.

Timothy.—Timothy's father was a Greek, and his mother a Jewess. He was a native either of Lystra or Derbe, in Asia Minor. Paul loved him so much that he called him "his own son." He travelled with Paul for some years; but was left in charge of the Church at Ephesus. 1 Tim. i. 3. The first Epistle was probably written soon after Paul's release from his first imprisonment at Rome. The second was written in the interval between one trial before Nero and that at which he was condemned to death. It is probably the last of Paul's writings.

Titus.—No mention of Titus is found in Acts. He first appears in Galatians ii. 1. 3. He was a Gentile by birth, and accompanied Paul in several of his journeys. The Epistle was sent to him while he was in Crete to set in order the Churches in the Island. It was written about the same time as the 1st Epistle to Timothy.

Philemon.—Onesimus, a slave, had defrauded his master Philemon, and run away. At Rome he

became a Christian through Paul, who sent him back to his Christian master with a letter.

Hebrews.—This epistle does not bear the name of the writer. There are differences of opinion with regard to the authorship; but it was probably written by Luke under the guidance of Paul. It was specially addressed to Jewish Christians, who were exposed to severe persecution from their unbelieving countrymen. The object is to dissuade them from falling back, and renouncing the faith in Christ. The writer therefore shows the superiority of the Christian to the Jewish Dispensation. Jesus is proved, from the Old Testament Scriptures, to be greater than angels, than Moses, than Aaron. The Jewish high-priesthood was surpassed by that of Melchizedek, and much more therefore by that of Christ. A comparison is drawn between the ordinances of the Law and the better promises of the Gospel. The practical part contains an exhortation to faith, brotherly love, patience, &c.

James.—The author of this letter was not James, the brother of John, who was beheaded by Herod. It is generally supposed to have been written by "James, the Lord's brother," (Galatians i. 19), who gave the final opinion at the great Christian Council. Acts xv. 13-21. The epistle was written at Jerusalem, and was primarily addressed to Jewish Christians. Being intended for them everywhere, it is called *general*. It urges patience under trials, it warns against adulation of the rich and contempt of the poor; it shows the vanity of faith without works; rebukes the wealthy oppressors of the poor, and exhorts to care of the tongue, to humility, and prayer.

It has been objected that the teaching of this Epistle is opposed to that of Paul; but such is not

the case. Paul's main object is to show that the ground of man's justification is faith in Christ; the object of James is to show that faith without works is dead. James admits that a single transgression of the law is fatal to keeping it, thereby showing that it cannot justify.

Peter.—Simon Peter, son of Jonas, was one of the foremost apostles. He is said to have preached to the Jews scattered over the countries around the Black Sea. His first letter was addressed to them from Babylon, probably about A. D. 63. The general design was to comfort them under affliction. The second Epistle was written when he apprehended his death, and was probably addressed to the same persons. He mentions the transfiguration as an eye-witness.

John.—There are three Epistles by the "disciple whom Jesus loved"; but two of them are very short. The first Epistle is addressed to Christians in general. Its design is, like that of the Gospel by John, to set forth the divinity and atoning work of Christ. The second Epistle was written to a Christian lady, known to the apostle; and the third to a friend, named Gaius. The chief grace inculcated is *love*.

Jude.—The author was probably the brother of James who wrote the Epistle so named. The object is to guard believers against false teachers. It contains an unrecorded saying of Enoch, and refers to the archangel Michael.

Revelation.—This is the last and most mysterious book of the Bible. The name means the unveiling what is hidden. It was written about 95 A.D., by the apostle John in Patmos, a small rocky island, south-west of Ephesus, to which he was banished by the Roman Emperor Domitian.

The book begins with messages to the Seven

churches in the west of Asia Minor. Seven is the symbol of completeness. Twelve is the representative number of the Church, corresponding with the twelve tribes of Israel. The angels of the churches are the rulers and teachers. The addresses to the seven churches contain precepts and exhortations, promises and threatenings, calculated to afford instruction to all ages.

A great part of the book is prophetic. Its interpretation has ever been a matter of great difficulty. It is generally regarded as representing the history of the Church till the end of time. In a series of emblems are depicted the principles of good and evil, truth and falsehood, in their ceaseless conflict on the stage of human affairs. The strife is ever renewed; the old evils reappearing in new forms. God's two witnesses are always prophesying in sackcloth, slain, and rising again to life; every change in the world's history is a new opening of the seals—a disclosure of the secret purposes of the Most High. When great calamities befall the nations, the trumpet of woe is sounded, the vial of wrath is outpoured. As the Gospel spreads, the New Jerusalem comes down, invisibly, from heaven to earth; but the consummation will be when, in the final triumph of the Church, "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ."

It may be remarked that prophecy was not intended to be understood perfectly until after its fulfilment. Although Revelation contains much that is obscure, it also abounds with passages some of the most sublime and instructive in the whole Bible.

PRAYER TO CHRIST.

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine.
Now hear me while I pray :
Take all my guilt away ;
Oh, let me from this day
Be wholly Thine.

May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire :
As Thou hast died for me,
Oh, may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be—
A living fire.

While life's dark maze I tread,
And griefs around me spread,
Be Thou my Guide :
Bid darkness turn to day,
Wipe sorrow's tears away ;
Nor let me ever stray
From Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream,—
When death's cold, sullen stream
Shall o'er me roll,—
Blest Saviour, then in love,
Fear and distress remove ;
Oh, bear me safe above,
A ransomed soul.

Ray Palmer.

XV. THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

The doctrines and duties of Christianity can best be learned from the New Testament ; but it may be useful to give a summary of them, noticing some of the most important points in which they differ

from Hinduism and Brahminism. A few preliminary remarks may, however, be made.

Divisions among Christians.—These are sometimes brought forward as an argument against inquiry; but it applies, more or less, to every subject on which men exercise their minds. On the science of political economy, for example, very opposite opinions are entertained. From its vast importance, special diversities may be expected on religion. The Mahábhárat says of Hinduism,

“Contradictory are the Vedas; contradictory are the Shastras; contradictory all the doctrines of the holy sages.”

The Brahmo Samaj is perhaps the youngest religious sect on the face of the earth, yet it is already divided into several societies. In a religion so old as Christianity, with adherents displaying the greatest intellectual activity, differences of opinion, on some points, are inevitable.

A distinction ought to be made between the *essential* and *non-essential* doctrines of Christianity. Many of the subdivisions among Christians arise simply from the latter. Church government is a leading cause. Just as some nations have a monarchical and others a republican form of government, so some Christians have a superior clergy, called archbishops and bishops, while among others all ministers are equal.

With regard to *most* of the essential doctrines, all Christians are agreed. This is shown by their acceptance of the ancient summary of belief, called the Apostles' Creed, quoted hereafter. It must, however, be allowed that there are differences among Christians with regard to a few important points. Hence their separation into three great branches—the Roman, Greek, and Protestant Churches.

The division of ancient Europe into the Western, or Roman, Empire, and the Eastern, or Greek, Empire led mainly to the separation between the Roman and Greek Churches. Romanists acknowledge the Pope of Rome as the head of the Church, while members of the Greek Church disclaim his authority. Protestants are so called, because they *protested*, or made a declaration against certain doctrines of the Church of Rome. All the three bodies receive the Bible as the word of God; but Roman Catholics assert that the Church must be the interpreter of its meaning. The Pope was also lately declared to be infallible in matters of doctrine.

Opinions held only by one denomination of Christians should not be attributed to the whole, more especially where they are directly contrary to the commands of their Master. Some have considered religious persecution justifiable. Infidels put this down to Christianity; but it is, in truth, a remnant of heathenism. Mill says, "Mankind have been unremittingly occupied in doing evil to one another in the name of religion, from the sacrifice of Iphigenia (about 1200 B.C.) to the Dragonnades of Louis XIV." It is strictly forbidden by Christ, and is not chargeable to His religion.

Christianity is Christ. It may be said of the different systems of it which have been framed,

"They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

It is the sincere acceptance of Jesus as the Saviour which makes a man a Christian.

Flattery or Truth?—Shakespeare says,

"Oh, that men's ears should be
To counsel deaf, but not to flattery!"

Hindus are peculiarly accessible to flattery. Shouts of applause greet any charlatan who speaks of the "glorious Sun of Aryan wisdom." Mr. Manomohan Ghose, lately sent to England as the Bengal Delegate, made the following remarks at a meeting held in Calcutta a few years ago :—

"He felt a legitimate pride in the ancient civilization of India, but he was bound to say that an undue and exaggerated veneration for the past was doing a great deal of mischief. It was quite sickening to hear the remark made at almost every public meeting that the ancient civilization of India was superior far to that which Europe ever had. Even if this assertion were based upon well ascertained facts, which it was surely not, it was only calculated to fill the speaker's mind with sorrow and shame, having regard to the present state of the country. It must be admitted by all who have carefully studied the ancient literature of India, that the much-vaunted civilization of India was of a peculiar type, and that it never could bear any comparison to what we call modern European civilization. Whatever might have been the case in ancient times, he thought that this frequent appeal to our ancient civilization could serve no good purpose at the present day, while it was simply calculated to make the Bengalis more conceited than they were."

A blind veneration for the past is a great obstacle to progress. It is one of the causes why both India and China remained nearly stationary for about two thousand years. The study of Sanskrit is recommended for the regeneration of India. The results are by no means satisfactory. Pandits who have devoted their lives to the language, are, as a rule, the greatest opponents of reform in every respect.

The above remarks may be made without detracting in the least from the merits of the great men of former days. An adult deserves no credit for being wiser than when he was a young child. The

common people regard those who lived many centuries ago as old sages, whose *dicta* ought to be received unquestioningly ; while they look upon the moderns as children. In some respects, the very reverse is the case. *We are the ancients* ; the world is now about three thousand years older than it was in the Vedic age. To use Bacon's figure, we may be dwarfs, yet, standing on the shoulders of giants, we can see farther than they.

Although the progress of humanity upwards has been slow, it has been real. Tennyson says,

" Yet I doubt through the ages an increasing purpose runs.
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process
of the suns."

The present generation should be,

" The heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time."

It would be disgraceful for it to go back to the " childhood of the world."

India has had its celebrated Rishis, men of acute intellect, zealous students, earnestly devoted to religious inquiry. In modern times it has had reformers like Ram Mohan Roy and Keshab Chunder Sen. Their attempts to solve the great problems of human existence may be examined and questioned without any disrespect to their genius. If they failed, it was only what was admitted by the deepest thinkers in ancient Europe—by men like Socrates, Plato, and Cicero.

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonian Christians, gave the advice : " Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good." The family motto of the Maharaja of Benares is, " There is no Religion higher than Truth." This should be the great object of our search.

Some of the leading doctrines of Christianity will now be stated.

1. **The Bible a Divine Revelation.**—The Vedas of the Hindus, the Korán of the Muhammadaus, and the Bible of Christians, all show that a revelation is considered necessary. The ancient Greeks had no sacred books, but the wisest among them felt their need. There are many important questions which cannot be answered without a Divine Revelation; as, what is the character of God? is the soul immortal? does God hear prayer? can sin be forgiven?

On the other hand, members of the Brahmo Samaj deny the necessity of what is called a "book revelation." The "Essential Principles of Brahmo Dharma" contains the following:—

"The true Scriptures written by the hand of God are two—the volume of nature and the natural ideas implanted in the mind. The wisdom, power, and mercy of the Creator are written in golden letters on the universe. We know Him by studying His works. Secondly, all the fundamental truths about God, immortality and morality are established in the constitution of men as primitive and self-evident convictions. Intuitive faith is the root of Brahmoism." p. 2.

The condition of India without Christianity, is the best reply to the above assertions. For three thousand years the country has had a succession of able and learned men, intensely religious. Did any one of them arrive at the "primitive and self-evident fundamental truths" of the Brahmo Samaj? They were pantheists, polytheists or atheists. Nor is this peculiar to India. "Intuitions have been the root of all the divisions and superstitions in the world. What has already been said of ancient civilised India, is true also of the civilization of Egypt and

China, and of educated Greece and Rome. The philosophers of the ancient world, with all their depth and culture, had scarcely a glimmering of those sublime truths which the Brahmos possess, in relation to God and creation, and their fellow-men, and a future life.*

The truths of Natural Theology, as soon as presented, are recognised as *conformable* to human reason; but past experience shows that they are not *discoverable* by human reason.

Ram Mohan Roy, the founder of the Brahma Samaj movement, was a diligent student of the New Testament, and from it he derived "the self-evident convictions" of the system. It is true that he also read the Koran; but any truths it contains came from the Bible.

With regard to the prejudice against a "book revelation," Rogers has the following remarks:—

"The objection is singularly inapposite, considering that by the constitution of the world and of human nature, man, without *books*—without the power of recording, transmitting, and perpetuating thought, of rendering it permanent and diffusive,—ever is, ever has been, and ever *must* be, little better than a savage; and therefore, if there was to be a Revelation at all, it might fairly be expected that it would be communicated in this form."

2. **The Unity of God.**—In the early creeds of India, this doctrine was only "the feeble and expiring echo of an older and purer revelation." "Duality," says Williams, "is an idea ingrained in the Hindu mind, adumbrated in the supposed marriage of Heaven and Earth for the production of gods, men, and all creatures." The Vedas repeatedly mention the number of the gods as thrice eleven: in the Puranas they are multiplied into

* Rev. T. E. Slater, *Keshub Chandra Sen*, pp. 172, 173.

thirty-three crores. The Sankhya philosophy of Kapila is atheistic. The Vedantic doctrine, on the other hand, is that God is the only existence.* *Ekam evādvītyam*, "The one without a second," does not mean that there is no second God, but that there is no second anything. Ram Mohan Roy adopted this well-known formula from the Chhandogya Upanishad, in which he thought he saw monotheism. But as Williams remarks, "The alleged purity of his monotheism was ever liable to be adulterated with pantheistic ideas." The phrase was retained by Keshab Chunder; the Sadharana Samaj has very properly omitted it, instead of using it in a totally different sense from its original meaning.

The Vaishnavas taught that Vishnu, or Hari, is the one eternal Supreme Being, all other gods being subject to the law of universal periodical dissolution. They also held God and the universe to be distinct.

"In India," says Williams, "all phases of religious belief are constantly meeting and partially fusing into each other." Hundreds of passages may be found in the Hindu sacred books apparently teaching the divine Unity, but that unity is pantheistic.

Christianity asserts the doctrine in clear, unmistakable terms. The Trinity, however, as noticed at page 32, is also maintained.

3. **The Holiness of God.**—Men have framed gods after their own evil hearts. "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." Pope

* Vedantic Pantheism differs in some respects from European Pantheism; but in the main principle they are so much alike, that they may be included under the same name.

thus describes the character of most of those which have been worshipped :—

“Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
Whose attributes were Rage, Revenge, and Lust.”

Hindu sacred books in some places characterise God as pure and holy, yet at the same time ascribe to Him actions like those of Krishna. The Conscious Supreme is invested with the three *gunas*,—*Sattva*, Truth, *Rajas*, Passion, *Tamas*, Darkness. The excuse made is that “To the mighty is no sin.” The idea is taken from a despot, who acts as he pleases. On the contrary, the greater the being, the greater the sin.

In opposition to this, Christianity says that “God is light, and in Him is no darkness of all.” He is spotlessly pure. Holiness is His most glorious attribute.

4. **Creation by God.**—The Bible commences with the declaration, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” We are indebted solely to Christianity for this great truth. It was unknown both to the East and West. To *create* means to *form out of nothing*. According to Vedantism, there is no real existence—all is *maya*. The Nyāya and other Hindu systems assert that souls are eternal. The “Fatherhood of God,” taught by Christianity and accepted by Brahmos, is thus denied. If we are eternal and self-existent, our relationship to God is changed into simply that of a king and subjects.

Some maintain that matter is eternal. To this it is replied, that every particle of it is a manufactured article, most skilfully adapted to the ends in view, much more so than the different stones of a great building or the wheels of a watch.

5. **The Worship of God.**—As our Creator, God is our rightful Lord. His first command is, "Thou shalt have none other gods beside Me." If we worship any other, we are guilty of rebellion against His authority. Jesus Christ gives the following directions as to the mode of worship: "God is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." As God is a spirit, any images of Him are strictly forbidden. "To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." The second commandment expressly forbids idolatry. God's holy name should be mentioned with respect. The third commandment is, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

God also requires the worship of the heart. Mere ceremonies or the thoughtless repetition of words, are worthless in His sight.

Public worship and united prayer were unknown among the Hindus, until they were introduced, through Christian example, into the Brahmo Samaj.

6. **A Future State of Rewards and Punishments.**

—Both Hinduism and Buddhism teach that the soul has been eternally transmigrating. A South Indian poet, translated by Gover, sings mournfully:—

"How many births are past, I cannot tell;
How many yet to come, no man can say;
But this alone I know, and know full well,
That pain and grief embitter all the way."

William says, "To draw any line of separation between stocks, stones plants, animals, men, demigods, and gods is, according to the theory of Brahmanism, impossible. They are all liable to run into each other."

As the result of *karma* a new being is formed, who is rewarded or punished for the deeds of a different being of whom he has not the slightest consciousness. On the other hand, Christianity teaches that our present life is our first existence, but that it will have no end, and the same being will be for ever rewarded or punished.

Buddhism is a most cheerless system. When a devout Buddhist tell his beads, he mutters, *Anitya, Dukha, Anatta*, "Transience, Sorrow, Unreality." All existence is considered a curse, and his great aim is to escape from the sufferings of life into *Nirvana*, or annihilation.

Hinduism is much the same. "The one engrossing problem is, How is a man to break this iron chain of repeated existences? How is he to shake off all personality? How is he to return to complete absorption (*sâyujya*), into pure unconscious spirit?"*

In opposition to this, Christianity has the promise of an eternity of conscious, unspeakable happiness.

7. **The Sinfulness of Man.**—Christianity teaches that man was created holy and happy. The Krita Yuga, the age of truth, is a tradition to the same effect. The fall of man is also virtually recognized in the Kali Yuga. "The deep sense of this fact," writes Coleridge, "and the doctrines grounded on obscure traditions of the promised remedy, are seen struggling, and now gleaming, now flashing, through the mist of pantheism, and producing the incongruities and gross contradictions of the Brahman mythology."

Among the masses in India, God is considered the author of sin. They say, "We must do what

* Williams, *Religious Thought in India*, p. 41.

is written on our head by Brahma." The excuse is constantly made, "It was our *karm*."

According to Vedantism, the root of sin is *aham-kāra*, self-consciousness, regarding one's self as distinct from God. When a man can say *Aham Brahman*, I am Brahma, then virtue and vice are alike to him. A South Indian poet says:—

"To them that fully know the heavenly birth,
There is no good or ill; nor any thing
To be desired, unclean, or purely clean."

Dirty, naked *Sannyasis*, indulging in the vilest brutality, claim to be pure, either on this principle or as imitators of Siva. Hindus are generally cleanly, but in the case of ascetics, says Williams, "filth appears to be regarded as a necessary accompaniment and evidence of particular forms of sanctity." For a sinful mortal to call himself Brahma, is the height of absurdity and wickedness.

"The more evidently," says Williams, "physical and metaphysical speculations are opposed to common sense, the more favour do they find with some Hindu thinkers. Common sense tells an Englishman that he really exists himself, and that everything he sees around him really exists also. He cannot abandon these two primary convictions. Not so the Hindu Vedantist."

Christianity teaches that we are free agents, and responsible for our actions.

Even the Hindu conscience tells, more or less, of sin, and warns of a coming judgment. This is shown by the crowds that bathe in the Ganges or other supposed sacred waters. Some Brahmans should daily make the following confession:—

Pápó'hám pápakarmáham pápátma pápasambhavaha :

The meaning is : I am sin ; I commit sin ; my

soul is sinful ; I am conceived in sin. This is very similar to the account of man's state given in the Bible. David says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity : and in sin did my mother conceive me." It is also written : "There is none righteous, no, not one."

8. **The Need of an Atonement.**—From the earliest ages and among all nations, it has been felt that sin deserves punishment. Sacrifice, as explained at page 12, has been the means employed to avert its consequences.

Some think that God may freely pardon sin without an atonement. But God is our King as well as our Father, and to forgive sin without satisfaction to His justice, would tend to spread rebellion throughout the universe. †

The teaching of Brahmism under this head will be noticed in the next chapter.

9. **The Incarnation of the Son of God.**—"No thoughtful student of the past records of man," says Trench, "can refuse to acknowledge that through all its history there has run the hope of a redemption from the evil which oppresses it ; and as little can deny that this hope has continually attached itself to some single man. The help that is coming to the world, it has seen incorporated in a person. The generations of men, weak and helpless in themselves, have evermore been looking after ONE in whom they may find all they look for vainly in themselves and in those around them."

The Hindu ideas with regard to incarnations have been noticed at page 11. Though defective in many respects, they recognise, says Hardwick, the idea of God descending to the level of the fallen creature and becoming man to lighten the burden of pain and misery under which the

universe is groaning. They show a struggling to become conscious of the personality of God, and a panting for complete communion with Him.

A very erroneous impression prevails among some Hindus. They think that Christianity represents the Father as angry till propitiated by the Son. On the contrary, the atonement originated in the love of the Father. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" to be our Saviour. But the Son was equally willing. His response was, "Lo! I come: I delight to do Thy will."

Some think it unjust, that the innocent should suffer instead of the guilty. Newman Hall thus answers this objection:—

"It would indeed be most unrighteous in any earthly ruler, were he to seize an innocent person, and make him suffer the sentence of the law, while the culprit himself was allowed to escape. Supposing, however, the purposes of law were equally accomplished, by an innocent person *voluntarily* submitting to death on behalf of a large multitude of offenders who must otherwise have died, there would be no departure from justice; neither would any alarm be caused to the innocent, by the expectation of being themselves compelled to suffer for the guilty. But if, by such voluntary transference of suffering, those offenders were also reclaimed and made good citizens,—and if moreover he who became their substitute, were restored to life, and as the result of his mediation, were raised to higher honour than before, not only justice would be satisfied, but benevolence would rejoice. So with the sacrifice of Christ. He, the righteous, suffered; that we, the unrighteous, might escape. But the act was voluntary. The suffering of Christ was brief, while His triumph is everlasting."

The ends of justice are satisfied by the Atonement of Christ. While sin is pardoned, it is shown to be an infinite evil. If God spared not His own Son, when He stood in the room of the guilty, He

will not spare sinners when they stand on their own footing

10. **Salvation by Grace.**—"God, with Hindu Theists," says Williams, "can only be propitiated by works. He may be called merciful, but He only shows mercy to those who deserve it by their actions, and if he accepts faith it is only because this also is a meritorious act. Every man's hope of heaven depends on his own self-righteousness and on the amount of merit he has been able to accumulate during life."

In the later Hindu sacred books, the idea of *bhakti** faith, as a means of salvation is formally taught. The great advocate of this was the Bengali Chaitanya, in the early part of the sixteenth century. Conduct is perfectly immaterial. An extraordinary value is attached to the repetition of Krishna's names, especially of his name Hari. "If a man die," says H. H. Wilson, "with the word Hari, or Rama, or Krishna, on his lip and the thought of him in his mind, he may have lived a monster of iniquity,—he is certain of heaven."

The Christian system is very different. Here, says Seeley, the blessing comes first, not only before obedience, but in the midst of our disobedience, God, in the Gospel, bestows His gifts. For "God commendeth His love to us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." All the blessings we receive are ascribed in the Gospel, not in the least to our own desert or merit, but wholly to God's free grace. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." Thus in every non-

* Also translated devotion and love.

Christian scheme there reigns a reliance upon man for the securing of the divine favour, while Christianity proclaims this favour as a free gift, founded on the merits of Christ, and the mercy of God alone. Any abuse of this is obviated by the next doctrine of Christianity which is stated.

11. **Sanctification through the Holy Spirit.**—

Salvation, according to Hinduism, is deliverance from future births. Christianity makes salvation a deliverance from the bondage of sin, and an eternal conscious happy existence in the presence of a holy God. Mary was told to call her Son "JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins." Christ said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3. The heart ~~must~~ be renewed before we can enter heaven. The Agent who purifies the soul is the Holy Spirit. While He also acts directly, He works chiefly through means. Some of them are the following:—

(1.) *The daily Study of the Scriptures.*—Jesus Christ, in His last prayer for His disciples before His death, said, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth." The benefit, however, will depend on the way in which they are read. Directions on this point are given at page 22.

(2.) *Prayer.*—Tennyson says,

"For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?"

At least morning and evening, there should be earnest prayer to God, and at every time when guidance or strength to resist temptation is needed, aspirations should ascend for help. A few examples of prayer are given in Appendix I.

(3.) *The use of public Religious Ordinances.*—By this is meant regular attendance at public worship and partaking of the Lord's Supper. The rest from ordinary duties on Sunday affords a most valuable opportunity for spiritual improvement.

(4.) *Self-Examination and Watchfulness.*—At the close of every day, our conduct should be briefly reviewed.

The sad confession must often be made:—

“The day is gone, its hours have run,
And Thou hast taken count of all
The scanty triumphs grace hath won—
The broken vow, the frequent fall.”

Pardon should be sought in prayer, but there should also be increased watchfulness in future against besetting sins.

The earnest desire for holiness which should be cherished may be expressed in the words:—

“More of Thy presence, Lord, impart;
More of Thine image let me bear;
Erect Thy throne within my heart,
And reign without a rival there.”

12. A Public Profession of Christianity by Baptism.—The ancient Greeks and Romans would willingly have given Jesus Christ a place in their pantheon; but He will not accept any divided homage. God alone must be worshipped. An acknowledgment of being Christ's follower is also required. “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.” Matt. x. 32, 33.

13. Moral Duties.—In Hinduism, says Bishop Caldwell, “moral teaching is totally unconnected with religious worship. A devout Hindu may live

a flagrantly immoral life." Moral merit is confounded with ritual punctuality.

In the Vedas and Upanishads the moral element is almost entirely absent. In the epic poems and Puranas there is hardly a virtue which is not lauded, but on the other hand there is scarcely a crime that is not encouraged by the example of some Indian divinity. The teaching of Hindu philosophy is worst of all, for it represents the man who has attained perfection as regarding good and evil with equal unconcern.*

So long as a man observes caste rules, he is recognised as a Hindu, although he may be guilty of theft, adultery, and murder. But let him drink water from a European, he instantly becomes unclean. Thus the Hindu conscience, with regard to moral duties, has been greatly perverted. Jesus Christ taught, on the other hand, that a man is defiled, not by what he eats, but by evil thoughts and actions.

Christianity declares that a man's religion is vain who does not attend to moral duties. These are summed up in one word—*love*. The first and great commandment is to love God with all our heart. The second is to love our neighbour as ourself. It is thus explained by Jesus Christ: "All things whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

It has been said that Confucius taught the same rule long before Jesus Christ; but there is an important difference. The maxim of Confucius is negative: "What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others." That of Christ is positive. The lesson of Confucius only forbids men to do what

* Abridged from Bishop Caldwell.

they feel to be wrong and hurtful. That of the Gospel requires us to commence a course of such conduct without regard to the conduct of others to ourselves. But Jesus Christ does not claim it as new. He says, "This is the law and the prophets." The rule is found substantially in the earlier revelations of God.

What men most need is not a knowledge of moral duty, but the inclination to act up to it. A Roman poet, a great sensualist, said, "I see and approve of better things, but I follow those that are worse." The chief difference between Christianity and other religions is, that it can furnish the needful strength to overcome sin.

The "Brotherhood of Man" is implied in the "Fatherhood of God." Both are strongly asserted by Christianity, and the duties dependent upon them enforced. The unrighteous system of caste and many other customs in India, are thus condemned.

It would occupy too much space to consider in detail the moral duties enjoined by Christianity.* This chapter may be closed by quoting the Apostles' Creed† and the Ten Commandments.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth :

And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell;‡ The third day He rose

* See *Short Papers for Young Men*. Tract Depôt, Madras. 1½ As. Post-free.

† It is called the *Apostles' Creed* to distinguish it from other creeds, but it was not written out by them.

‡ *Hell* here means the unseen world.

again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick* and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The Holy Catholic† Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. Amen.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.
5. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.

* Living. † Catholic means *general*.

XVI. "TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?"

The life of Jesus Christ, the first planting of the Christian Church, and an outline of the doctrines of Christianity, have thus, though very imperfectly, been laid before the reader. Again, however, he is earnestly recommended to study the New Testament itself. In this concluding chapter the practical issue of the whole is considered.

Some preliminary remarks may be made on RELIGIOUS INQUIRY, and how it ought to be conducted to arrive at a correct conclusion.

Frame of Mind Necessary.—All moral truth requires as a condition of its acceptance a moral state in a measure at least sympathetic with it. You can compel the assent of every one, who has sufficient intelligence, to any one of Euclid's propositions. But you cannot so show the beauty of charity to the miser, or the superiority of virtue to sensual indulgence to one who lives only to gratify lust. Where moral truth is presented, the mind must be at least willing to hear, to reflect seriously, to consider candidly what arguments may be brought; it must not be committed against a conclusion, but be willing to receive that which is supported by reason. There is profound truth in the saying of a Hindu, quoted by Sir William Jones: "Whoever obstinately adheres to a set of opinions may at last bring himself to believe that the freshest sandal-wood is a flame of fire."* "Atheism," says Plato, "is a disease of the soul before it becomes an error of the understanding." The deepest objections to Christianity arise from the pride and self-righteousness, the lust and world-

* Abridged from Storrs, *The Divine Origin of Christianity*.

liness of human nature, even where the intellect and conscience may be so far subdued.

Evidence to be Expected.—Mathematical demonstration is confined to a limited class of subjects. In the practical affairs of life no man looks for it. Still less can it be expected in the invisible things of God.

The late Lord Hobart remarks, "In numerous instances Truth is only to be attained by comparing and balancing the considerations appertaining to different sides." Butler shows in his *Analogy of Religion* that "to us probability is the very guide of life." The farmer sows with the *probability* only that he will reap. The scholar toils with the probability, often a slender one, that his days will be prolonged, and success crown his labours in subsequent life. We are under obligation to use the best light we have, even though that should be dim and unsatisfactory in some respects. "Now we see through a glass darkly."

Atheists bring forward objections against the existence of God; theists consider that the counterbalancing arguments have much greater weight. It is the same with Christianity. There is nothing deep without mystery. Sir William Hamilton remarks, "No difficulty emerges in Theology which had not previously emerged in Philosophy." John Stuart Mill says, "The Christian religion is open to no objections, either moral or intellectual, which do not apply at least equally to the common theory of Deism."

The advocates of freethought circulate among Hindus tracts on alleged contradictions of the Bible. They may be new to those to whom they are presented; but, with few exceptions, they are the same

as were urged by the opponents of Christianity as early as the second century. Cowper says,

"The infidel has shot his bolts away,
Till his exhausted quiver yielding none,
He gleans the blunted shafts that have recoiled,
And aims them at the shield of Truth again.

The late Bishop Cotton thus notices the opinions of some educated Hindus :—

"Many of them write as if the Bible had been actually given up by the educated classes in Europe, as if every unsolved difficulty were a fatal blow to Christianity, every specious objection an unanswerable refutation of its pretensions. They do not perceive that in an age of unbounded curiosity and restless inquiry, a historical revelation, necessarily addressed in part to the intellect, and given to us in fragments through a long series of ages, must be exposed to cavil and criticism. They fail to understand that the present movement is but temporary, arising from the application of modern thought to Christianity, and is little more than a repetition in a somewhat altered form of other trials through which our religion has passed in times when, from any special circumstances, men's minds have been agitated, quickened, or invigorated, and from which it has always emerged in new majesty and security. They seem ignorant that, among educated Europeans, there are very many who are quite aware of the objections brought forward, but yet are undisturbed by a particle of doubt or uneasiness; while at least, an equal number, though sometimes more or less perplexed by subtle difficulties ingeniously urged, or inherent in the subject-matter of revelation, yet repose with entire confidence on the positive proof of Christianity, and that both these classes, together with a vast multitudes of simpler men, who happily know nothing of either ancient or modern unbelievers, cling to the faith of Christ as a sure refuge from the sins and sorrows of the present, and the awful uncertainties of the future."*

In the search after religious truth, the following requisites are necessary :

* Preface to Calcutta Cathedral Lectures.

1. **Earnestness.**—Some men are wholly indifferent to religion. The folly of such conduct is thus shown by Pascal, a distinguished French writer :—

"I know not who has sent me into the world, nor what the world is, nor what I myself am. All that I know is that I must soon die, but what I know least of all is this death which I cannot escape.

"As I know not whence I came, so neither know I whither I go. I only know that, on leaving this world, I fall for ever into nothingness, or into the hands of an angry God, without knowing whether of these two conditions is to be my lot for eternity. Behold my state, full of misery, of weakness, of darkness! And from all this I conclude that I am to pass all the days of my life without caring to inquire what is to befall me. Perhaps I might find some enlightenment in my doubts, but I will not take the trouble, or lift my foot to seek it."

There are some men who, although not quite indifferent to religion, show no earnest spirit of inquiry, and are content to remain perpetual doubters.

Suppose you saw a farmer sitting quietly in his house with folded hands, in the midst of seed-time. You ask him why he is not busy in his fields. The reply is, that he has not yet determined what kind of grain is best adapted to his soil. Suppose you knew a man who all his life was in doubt what profession to choose. You would surely think that these men had lost their senses. But far greater is the folly of the man who is content to remain without settled views about religion.

Earnestness is necessary to success even in common life. It is only the earnest student who gains University honours; it is only the diligent man who becomes rich. Much more is earnestness needful in religion. The royal Hebrew moralist

said that wisdom will be found, "if thou seekest for her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures." A greater than Solomon gave the warning, "Strive to enter in at the straight gate; for many I say unto you shall seek to enter, and shall not be able."

In a certain sense, the man who is indifferent to religion has made his choice; but it is the broad and easy road, leading to destruction.

Earnestness implies the use of means to arrive at the truth. For this purpose the best and most appropriate works on the subject should be studied carefully, with prayer.

The chief book should be the New Testament, to be followed by the Old Testament. A Reference Bible with Maps is a great help. One passage of Scripture often throws great light upon another.

Only a few treatises on Christianity have yet been prepared in English for Indian students, and some of them are not now available. At the end of this volume there is a list of some books which may be read with advantage.

2. **Humility.**—The following wise caution was given to Madras students a few years ago in a Convocation Address:—

"Beware, above all things, of an arrogant, irreverential frame of mind. ... Self-assertion and vanity, insolence towards the past, recklessness as to the future, satisfaction with ourselves, indifference to the feelings of others, are the certain characteristics of a superficial, worthless education, and of an ill-trained moral character."

"Freethought" journals are illustrations of this, and at once show how unsafe they are as guides on questions of religion.

3. **Prayerfulness.**—Religion teaches our duty to God, and He who is its object is best fitted to

aid us in the search. As Paul told the Athenians, He is not far from any one of us. Acts xvii. 27. If we seek Him in the right way, we shall at last find Him. The promise in the Bible is, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James i. 5. But there must be a sincere desire to know the truth, and a child-like submission to God's teaching. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

4. **Obedience to Conscience.**—Conscience is the voice within us distinguishing between right and wrong. It speaks to us in clearer or fainter tones according to the manner in which it is treated. It is possible to stifle it altogether by a course of crime. The same principle determines the result in the search after religious truth. If we make use of the light we possess, more will be given; if we act contrary to it, the light is gradually extinguished.

A man who indulges in vice of any kind cannot expect to arrive at the truth. Of the successful searcher Tennyson says,

"Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out."

Conformity to idolatrous customs, felt to be wrong, is another great obstacle. Every known sin must be abandoned. There will be occasional falls, but there must be a struggle against them.

A further step may be explained. You believe that there is only one God. Your conscience tells you that He must be a benevolent, holy Being. You acknowledge Him to be your Father in heaven. If so, He justly claims a father's love and respect. A dutiful child loves an earthly father; he goes to him with all his wants and difficulties; he follows

his guidance; he avoids whatever would be displeasing to him. Do you act in this way toward your heavenly Father? Do you live as in His constant presence? Do you love to make known your wants to Him in prayer? Do you seek to please Him in all things?

The above is a *condition of success* in the search. Without it, all else is vain.

HINDUISM AND BRAHMOISM REVIEWED.

Atheism.—This is not a religion. It would occupy too much space to state the arguments by which it is refuted. Two excellent works on the subject are noted below.* Some profess *agnosticism*, or uncertainty about the existence of God. As a rule, they are *practically* atheists. They live as if there was no God, and *didn't care* whether there was one or not.

Men are prone to rush from one extreme to another. Still, from the deep religiousness which characterises the Hindu mind, it is not likely that atheism or agnosticism will have many followers in India.

Hinduism.—Every really educated man must unhesitatingly reject popular Hinduism with its 33 crores of gods and goddesses. Some Hindus, too enlightened to accept the Purānas, seek refuge in the Vedas. In many cases ignorant of them except by name, they suppose them to be monotheistic. The error of this has already been shown. Intelligent men cannot go back to the gods of the Vedas, to Indra, Agni, Surya, &c. They cannot offer the prayers of the Vedas. They need something more

* Row's *Existence and Character of God*. 1 Anna. post-free. Paley's *Natural Theology*. 9½ As. post-free. Tract Depôt, Madras.

than cows and horses, health and wealth, the destruction of public and domestic enemies. They cannot make the offerings of the Vedas. They cannot present the intoxicating soma juice, inviting Indra to "drink like a thirsty stag;" they cannot perform the *ashwamedha*. "No one in his senses" says Max Müller, "would for one moment claim for the Vedas a superhuman origin."*

The metaphysical speculations of Hindu philosophy can never satisfy an intelligent man, who is earnest in religious inquiry.

When Christianity began to make progress in the Roman Empire, some tried to check it by spiritualizing the existing heathenism. A similar attempt is now being made to devise a "New Hinduism," more adapted than that of the Shastras to bear the scrutiny of modern enlightenment. The leading novelist of Bengal has been trying to rehabilitate Krishna. It does not rest on any foundation, and must meet with the same end as the older effort of the same kind.

BRAHMOISM.—During its brief history, this system has assumed different phases. Its founder, Ram Mohan Roy, first learned monotheism from the Bible and Koran, and then tried to find it in the Upanishads. In 1820 he published "The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness; extracted from the Books of the New Testament." Although one of the greatest social and religious Reformers that India has produced, it is not surprising that he should have retained some Hindu leaven. It has already been stated that his monotheism was tinged with pantheism. "He died a Hindu," says Williams, "in respect of external

* Biographical Essays, p. 40.

observances; his Brahman servant performed the usual rites required by his master's caste, and his Brahmanical thread was found coiled round his person when his spirit passed away. In all his Anti-Brahmanism he continued a Brahman to the end."

In 1843 the Society founded by Ram Mohan Roy was incorporated with another, established by Debendra Nath Tagore. After careful investigation, the infallibility of the Vedas was given up in 1850, and the Society became a purely Theistic church, without any acknowledged Scriptures.

In 1857, Keshab Chunder Sen, then nineteen years of age, joined the Samaj. An alumnus of the Presidency College, he had a fair knowledge of English. "He became," says Max Müller, "an ardent student of the Bible, helped by the Rev. T. H. Burne, Domestic Chaplain to Bishop Cotton."* "With Francis William Newman's works he was not only familiar as a student, but he corresponded with him. Theodore Parker's books he read with warm admiration."† From their writings he acquired his ideas of "intuition"—and his prejudices against "book-revelations" and "dogmas."

In June 1860, he issued his first tract, "Young Bengal. This is for you." It was followed in September, by No. 4, "Basis of Brahmoism. Brahmoism stands upon the Rock of Intuition, and is above the Fluctuations of Sectarian Opinions." In 1862 he was ordained a minister of the Samaj, and was appointed its Secretary. Gradually differences arose between him and the President. Deben-

* Biographical Essays, p. 53.

† P. C. Mozoomdar in *The Liberal*, Aug. 17, 1884.

dra Nath bore with his young coadjutor while promulgating doctrines new to the Hindus; but when the latter insisted upon the renunciation of caste, the conservative President in 1865 ousted the advanced Secretary and his party. When reunion seemed unlikely, Keshab Chunder in 1866 established a new Society, called the Brahmo Samaj of India.

It was western knowledge which made Keshab Chunder commence his career as a reformer; but there was a Hindu element in him which gathered strength the longer he lived. Probably the influence of his mother had a considerable effect in this direction. His mental powers were also gradually weakened by disease.

The caste spirit of Hinduism manifested itself in Keshab Chunder in the craving for an "Oriental Christ." He "found Christianity at first, as he readily admitted, in the New Testament and in Christian books; he tried latterly to give Christ and His truths an *Indian* origin. He presented Christ as an Indian *Yogi*, rather than as universal Humanity. A true reformer should think and speak as a man, not as a member of any particular race. A seeker after Truth should not love a doctrine more because it is Indian or because it is English, but because he sees it to be divine."* On Keshab's principle, there should be as many Christs as there are countries in the world. The Western nations accepted an Eastern Christ. But the Christ of the New Testament meets equally the desire of every human soul. It is a false patriotism which rejects a truth or refuses to adopt any good reform because it is not national.

* Slater, *Keshab Chandra Sen*, p. 123.

In 1881 Keshab established, "under the name of the New Dispensation, a new Hinduism which combines *Yoga and Bhakti*, and also a new Christianity which blends together Apostolical faith and modern civilization and science."* It claimed to be "equally divine, equally authoritative with the Christian Dispensation."†

The following extract is from "The Song of the New Dispensation":—

"Chanting the name of Hari, the saints dance.

"Moses dances, Jesus dances, with hands uplifted, inebriated with love; and the great *rishi* Narad dances, playing on the lyre.

"The great *yogi* Mahadeo dances in joy; with whom dances John with his disciples.

"Nanak, Prahlad, and Nityanand all dance; and in their midst are Paul and Mahomed."‡

In his younger days, Keshab Chunder considered a "book-revelation" unnecessary. Latterly, he virtually claimed inspiration, and presumed to speak like a Hebrew prophet. The following is an extract from one of his supposed revelations:—

"On that day I saw the Lord as a flame of consuming fire, and I was full of lightning. The Lord called me saying, son of man.

"And I answered and said, Lord, speak for thy servant heareth.

And the Lord said, Arise and gird up thy loins and tell my people that I am the Lord their God and they are my people."

I sent my prophets Chaitanya, Nanak and Kabir and many others to tell them my ways."§

* Letter to Max Müller. Biographical Essays, p. 117.

† Calcutta Lecture, 1881.

‡ *Sunday Mirror*, March 7th, 1880.

§ *Ibid*, Feb. 22, 1880.

He issued a proclamation from "India's Mother":—

"To all my soldiers in India, my affectionate greeting. Believe that this proclamation goeth forth from heaven in the name and with the love of your mother, and carry out its behests like loyal soldiers. The Brahma Samaj as my Church. Tell all people to come direct to me, without a mediator or intercessor, and accept me as their mother."*

The foregoing extracts prove the truth of the confession Keshab makes in his "Prayers:" "I have strangely got into the habit, O my God, of crediting Thee with all my ideas and plans." (p. 51). Max Müller says, "The utterances of late have shown signs, I am sorry to say, of an over-wrought brain and an over-sensitive heart. He sometimes seems to me on the verge of the very madness of faith."†

Before his death, Keshab instituted "The New Homa Ceremony." Ghee, poured on blazing fuel, "produced a brisk fire, which he thus addressed: O THOU BLAZING AGNI, Thou art not God; we do not adore thee. But in thee dwells the Lord, the Eternal, Inextinguishable Flame...O thou brilliant Agni in thee we behold our Resplendent Lord."

After his death, *The Liberal*, the organ of the "New Dispensation," had the following announcement: "RETURN TO VEDANTA—We need not say very much upon our return to Vedanta. This is a known fact. The foundation of Brahmoism was laid upon Upanishads." (June 7th, 1881). Keshab rightly characterised the "New Dispensation" as a "New Hinduism." Its prospects at present are not hopeful.

The *Sadharana Brahma Samaj* was formed in 1878 by a secession from the Samaj of India. Its

* *Sunday Mirror*, Dec. 14, 1879. † Biographical Essays, p. 92.

doctrines may be defined as simple theism. "Several of its leaders," says Max Müller, "seem to me to act in an excellent spirit." Its organ, *The Indian Messenger*, has a high moral tone.

The Insufficiency of Brahmoism.—The noble efforts of members of the Brahmo Samaj in the cause of religious and social reform, in the face of tremendous obstacles, deserve hearty acknowledgment. The Rev. T. E. Slater bears the following testimony:—

"And what has been the faith that they have preached? That there is one true God of the universe, and Father of men. Is not this a real step in advance of the polytheism and pantheism that have eaten out the heart of India? Is it nothing to have penetrated the dense dark thicket of ignorance and superstition, and to have come out into the light? Let us think of the immense gain of Theism; of its purer and loftier conceptions of God, and man, and responsibility, and sin, and human destiny, and natural law, and universal order. Let us think, too, of the necessary surrender of evils and of evil habits, which the faithful acknowledgment of one true God requires. And let us remember, further, that the Brahmo Samaj has borne this testimony to God and true religion in the face of the growing spirit of indifference, materialism, and positivism, that has been prevailing in the country. It has certainly arrested some on the road from superstition to infidelity, and turned their feet into the way of truth."*

Mr. Slater, while thus commending the Theistic movement in India, adds, "Because we value it too highly not to deplore its falling short of a true and worthy goal, we now proceed briefly to point out, in the spirit of Christian fidelity and kindness, where we consider it to be lacking in elements of strength, and why we cannot regard it as the permanent form of religious faith in which India will rest."

The late lamented Dr. Krishna Mohan Banerjee held that the Brahmos, "by denying the fact or pos-

* Keshab Chandra Sen, p. 156.

sibility of a Revelation and the mysterious doctrine that without shedding of blood there is no remission," were in some respects farther away from the truth than the old Rishis. He argued "That the fundamental principles of Christian doctrine in relation to the salvation of the world find a remarkable counterpart in the Vedic principles of primitive Hinduism in relation to the destruction of sin, and the redemption of the sinner by the efficacy of Sacrifice, itself a figure of *Prajapati*, the Lord and Saviour of the Creation, who had given himself up as an offering for that purpose."

The following are some of the defects of Brahmoism :—

1. *The Want of Certainty in its Doctrines* —The "fundamental truths" of the system are admitted to be simply "intuitive." The "rock" has proved shifting sand. Probably no religious sect has, within the same period, exhibited so many "fluctuations" of opinions as the Brahmo Samaj. The experiment had a fair trial in Keshab Chunder Sen. He had ability and earnestness, but he failed like all before him.

2. *An insufficient Sense of the Guilt of Sin.*—Miss Collet justly remarks, "On the sense of sin depends the whole development of practical religion."

"True," says Mr. Slater, "there is much said of sin, especially in later Brahmist writings, and considerable prominence is given to repentance and holiness of life; the only defect is that the writers and speakers do not say enough. The *guilt* of sin—and not simply its weakening power as a disease—when viewed in the light of a Holy and Loving God whose laws we have broken, and the painful sense of separation from Him, which a true consciousness of sin produces, do not appear to be

realised as distressing facts burdening the conscience."

Hindus are especially apt to have a very inadequate sense of the evil of sin. Their own gods are said sometimes to commit sin *in sport*. Its guilt, it is supposed, may be washed away by bathing in the Ganges. On the contrary, the one true God is of spotless purity. Of sin, He says, "Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate."

What is *sin*? God claims to be supreme over the world which He has Himself created; it is essential to the welfare of the universe that He should be supreme. Every sin is a defiance of His authority, a declaration on the part of the sinner, that he will not have God to reign over him. "All the guilt that lies in foul rebellion against the mildest and most merciful of earthly monarchs—in disobeying the kindest, and grieving the best of fathers—in ingratitude to a generous benefactor—...; all that evil, multiplied a thousand and a thousand times, there is in sin."

Suppose a man committed theft, the value of the article stolen has not simply to be considered. The evil is that if theft did not involve a penalty, no man's property would be safe. It is the same with sin. A single violation of God's law with impunity, would tend to spread rebellion through the universe.

All branches of the Brahmo Samaj reject the doctrine of a Mediator. After trampling under foot for years the commands of the great Lawgiver, they think that they may go alone into His presence. Christians, sensible of their vileness, consider that they can approach Him only through a Mediator. This need is wonderfully provided by the Incarnation of the Son of God—another doctrine rejected by the Brahmos.

It would occupy too much space to show that mediation is in accordance with the Divine government of the world. The chapter on the subject in Butler's *Analogy of Religion** should be consulted.

3. *Brahmoism, like all non-Christian systems, is salvation by works.*—We are naturally proud. We wish to gain admission into heaven on account of our own merits. An ignorant Hindu thinks that this may be obtained through the gift of a cow to a Brahman. The more intelligent hope to secure it by their prayers, attention to moral duties, &c. This is virtually the teaching of the Brahmos. After adequate suffering for their sins, they finally enter heaven on account of their own good deeds. The doctrine of Christianity is very different.

It is impossible to tell whether a garment be clean or dirty by examining it in a dark room. To judge properly, it should be taken out in the sun. Somewhat in like manner, if we would ascertain our true condition, we must view ourselves, as it were, in the dazzling splendour of God's presence. A holy man of old said to God, "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." Another confessed, "We are all as an unclean thing; and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." A third said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

As a beggar in dirty rags could not appear in one of the durbars of the Queen of England, much less can we stand before God, clothed in the garments of our fancied good works. God has provided a

* Obtainable from the Tract Depôt, Madras, Postage free, for 10 as.

robe, spotlessly pure, the righteousness of Christ. Only by putting off their own rags and accepting this glorious robe, do Christians hope to enter heaven. This doctrine is so repulsive to human pride, that it is not received till it is seen to present the only remedy.

Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans (Chaps. i—iii), shows that no one can be saved through his supposed obedience to the law. There is the "irreparable past"—the many sins we have already committed, and we are adding to their number every day of our lives.

4. *The Want of a dominant Motive to Holiness:—*The *Indian Mirror*, some years ago, had the following remarks:—

"O limed soul that struggling to be free
Art more engaged!"

"In these words, Shakespeare, ever true to nature, faithfully depicts the condition of the sinner's soul struggling to be delivered from vicious habits. Are we not all conscious of that state of mind in which the more we try to cut through the fetters of sin, the more inextricably are we en-chained?"

Christianity alone affords the needful "moral dynamic," the inducement to make the sinner give up the sin he loves so well. "Complete victory," says Maclaren, "over the old sinful self is to be found in Jesus Christ. Union with Him gives us a real possession of a new principle of life, derived from Him and like His own. An all-constraining motive will be found in love to Him who has given Himself for us."

5. *Want of Comfort in Death.*—Brahmoism might suffice if we had never sinned. In his last moments

a Brahmist may well take up the exclamation of a dying heathen philosopher, "In great alarm, I depart."

The teaching of Brahmoism with regard to sin is as follows:—

"Every sinner must suffer the consequences of his own sins, sooner or later, in this world or in the next; for the moral law is unchangeable and God's justice is irreversible. His mercy also must have its way. As the just King He visits the soul with adequate agonies, and when the sinner, after being thus chastised, mournfully prays, He, as the merciful Father, delivers and accepts him and becomes reconciled to him. Such reconciliation is the only true atonement." *Principles*, p. 7.

The soul is to be visited with "adequate agonies." Where no deep sense of sin is felt, these may be supposed to be of short duration; but when seen in its true light as an infinite evil, the prospect is appalling.

There is also another very grave consideration. The effect of punishment is usually different from that attributed to it by Brahmoism. Dr. Norman Macleod says:—

"Men attach, perhaps, some omnipotent power to mere suffering, and imagine that if hatred to sin and love to God are all that is needed, then a short experience of the terrific consequences of a godless past must ensure a godly future. Why do they think so? This is not the effect which mere punishment generally produces on human character. Its tendency is not to soften, but to harden the heart,—to fill it not with love, but with enmity."

6. *The Want of Permanence*.—Mr. Slater says, "No form of natural theism has ever been the religion of any race or country. Polytheism, pantheism, and atheism, have always proved stronger and more influential than mere theism. Only when allied with revelation has theism been able to cope

with its foes. The few gifted men in Persia, in Greece, in Rome, in India, who have risen above the thought of their time, failed to effect any deep and permanent reform, and failed to speak with authority to others. An eminent writer has observed, 'Theism is the easiest of all religions to get, but the most difficult to keep. Individuals have kept it, but nations never.'

Christians, though candidly pointing out what appear to be the weak points of Brahmoism, cherish sincere respect for its leaders, and watch their course with deep interest.

CHRISTIANITY.

Evidences.—It would require several volumes to state these completely. The following is a brief reply given by President Hopkins, Williams' College, United States, to the question why he believed Christianity to be true:—

1. I believe Christianity to be true because I believe the narratives contained in the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. These mutually confirm each other, and are, to say the least, as worthy of credit as any other ancient narratives.

2. So far from disbelieving these narratives because of the miraculous element in them, I believe them a revealed system being in itself miraculous, because the miracles which are narrated as a part of the system, as well as those which go to confirm it, are *such* miracles.

3. I believe Christianity to be true, because of the types and prophecies which preceded it.

4. Because of its marvellous connection with what went before, both as identical and diverse. It is identical in spirit as requiring righteousness, and as providing for pardon through sacrifice, but so diverse in form that to this day the Jews do not see the identity.

5. Because there is to such an extent an analogy between Christianity and Nature.

6. Because if Christianity had not been of God it would have perished in the tomb of Jesus.

7. Because it has so greatly modified social life and institutions, has founded new civilizations, and has in it the only principle and method of permanent progress.

8. Because it alone reveals God as a Father, and so provides for the brotherhood of the race.

9. Because its morality is coincident with that drawn from a philosophical analysis of the constitution of man, is perfect, and would perfect society.

10. Because the character of Christ could not have originated with man.

11. Because, much less could the character of Christ combined with His offices of Prophet, Priest, King and final Judge, have been thus originated. But both His character and offices are indispensable to His being such a Saviour as man needs.

12. Because Christianity is fitted to be the universal religion.

13. Because, as gravitation is universal by reaching the masses through its action on each particle, so Christianity seeks to become universal by dealing with men as individuals.

14. Because Christianity reveals a future state in accordance with the highest faculties and aspirations of man, and makes provision for fitting him for that state, both in his relation as a sinner to the perfect moral government of God, and as he needs an inward change.

15. Because the future state thus revealed is the only basis for an optimistic view of the present life, and so far a justification of the ways of God to men.

16. Because Christ, as He is revealed in the New Testament, is just a Saviour as I need, and is "precious" to me, as He is to all who believe.

Try Christianity.—The value of a medicine is best tested by its use. Coleridge says, "Christianity is not a theory, or a speculation, but a life :—not a philosophy of life but a life, and a living process. TRY IT. It has been eighteen hundred years in existence ; and has one individual left a record like the following : ' I tried it, and it did

not answer. I made the experiment faithfully according to the directions; and the result has been a conviction of my own credulity." The promise of Jesus Christ is, "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself." The best way to judge of Christianity is to follow Coleridge's advice, *Try it*.

Alone in his chamber or in some retired spot, let the reader kneel down, and address the Saviour in words like the following:—

"Just as I am,—without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,—
O Lamb of God, I come!

"Just as I am,—and waiting not,
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!"

Just as I am,—poor wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am,—Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!

While Jesus was on earth, a man in deep distress said to Him, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." Though the reader may only be able to

"Stretch the lame hands of faith and grope,"
let him go to Jesus, saying,

"Just as I am,—though toss'd about,
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come!"

Jesus Christ said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Luke v. 32. If the reader does not feel the burden of sin, he is not likely to seek for relief; but if "weary and heavy laden," let him go to Jesus, and he will assuredly find rest for his soul.

All the preparation required is to feel your need of salvation through Jesus Christ. It is true that we need to be cleansed from sin; but this must be done *after* we come to Christ—not *before*. Jesus Christ came to save *sinners*.

Some may object that free salvation through Christ will tempt men to sin: they consider punishments and rewards necessary to secure obedience. But true love is the strongest of all motives. A mother watches over her child with far greater care than a slave who fears the lash or a hireling who looks to his pay.

The believer, however, is not left to himself. Jesus Christ uses the illustration "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Through faith we are united to Christ, like a branch ingrafted upon a tree. We share in His life, and become animated by His spirit.

There should be earnest efforts after holiness. Some of the means to be used for this purpose are mentioned at page 177.

O the unspeakable happiness of being a true Christian! A good man, when dying, was heard to say:—

"I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am a redeemed sinner, a pardoned rebel, all through grace, and by the most wonderful means which infinite wisdom could devise. I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am a temple of God, and surely I ought to be pure and holy. I am a Christian

—what then? I am a child of God, and ought to be filled with filial love, reverence, joy, and gratitude. I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am a disciple of Christ, and must imitate Him who was meek and lowly in heart and pleased not Himself. I am a Christian—what then? Why, I am an heir of heaven, and hastening on to the abodes of the blessed, to join the full choir of the glorified ones in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb."

What Christianity would do for India.—A Roman expiring on the field of battle would say, "Sweet is it and honourable to die for one's country." The patriotism of the ancient Greeks and Romans was very narrow. Even at present says Smiles, "A great deal of what passes by the name of patriotism consists of the merest bigotry and narrow-mindedness; exhibiting itself in national prejudice, national conceit, and national hatred." But there is a better kind of patriotism—a sincere desire for the benefit of one's country, without injury to other nations.

At present among many of the educated classes, *self-government* is considered the panacea for the evils of India. Past experience belies this hope. The South American Republics obtained self-government, but how lamentable has been their condition! Smiles says, "In all times men have been prone to believe that their happiness and well-being were to be secured by means of institutions rather than by their own conduct." Herbert Spencer, in his *Study of Sociology*, shows the folly of expecting to effect beneficent changes in society by legislative apparatus except as the result of wide preparatory changes in individual character. The desire of educated Indians to have a larger share in the government of the country is by no means condemned. The only question is about the best way of securing the end in view. An American

writer says: "The form of government must naturally vary according to the intelligence and virtue of the people. If, then, citizens would influence the government, if they would render it more mild and liberal, they must seek to enlighten and reform the great body of the people."

The late Sir Madava Row, the most eminent Indian statesman of recent times, says,

"The longer one lives, observes, and thinks, the more deeply does he feel there is no community on the face of the earth which suffers less from political evils, and more from self-inflicted or self-accepted or self-created, and therefore avoidable evils than the Hindu community!"

Hinduism is the greatest bar to social reform. Rao Bahadur M. G. Ranade expressed the following opinion in a letter to Mr. M. Malabari:—

"Our deliberate conviction, however, has grown upon us with every effort, that it is only a religious revival that can furnish sufficient moral strength to work out the complex social problems which demand our attention. Mere considerations of expediency or economical calculations of gains or losses can never nerve a community to undertake and carry through social reforms, especially with a community like ours, so spell-bound by custom and authority. Our people feel and feel earnestly, that some of our social customs are fraught with evil, but as this evil is of a temporal character, they think that it does not justify a breach of commands divine, for such breach involves a higher penalty. The truth is, that orthodox society has lost its power of life, it can initiate no reform, nor sympathise with it. Only a religious revival, a revival not of forms, but of sincere earnestness which constitutes true religion, can effect the desired end."

By embracing Christianity, the iron fetters of caste would be broken; the people would be freed from its numberless absurd restrictions, and be at liberty to visit any part of the world, without being put under a ban on their return. Child marriage and the obstacles to widow marriage would

disappear; woman would be enlightened, and take the place in society she ought to occupy, raising and purifying its tone.

There are still stronger reasons. Educated Hindus are so much accustomed to idolatry that many think of it lightly, apologise for it, or, even take part in its observances. The Oxford Professor of Sanskrit thus describes the effect produced upon himself by a Hindu festival in the Madras Presidency :—

"No sight in India made me more sick at heart than this. It furnished a sad example of the utterly debasing character of the idolatry, which, notwithstanding the counteracting influences of education and Christianity, still enslaves the masses of the population, deadening their intellects, corrupting their imaginations, warping their affections, perverting their consciences, and disfiguring the fair soil of a beautiful country with hideous images and practices unsanctioned even by their own most sacred works."

What a glorious change would be produced by the worship of the one true God, our great Heaven-Father! What Indian, with a spark of patriotism, would not wish to see it brought about?

Moral Condition of England.—It is objected that Christian England is not morally what it ought to be. This is true, but it is simply because Christianity is not obeyed. The same argument applies to government. It is a great check upon injustice, but in spite of it there will be thefts and acts of violence. There are many persons in England mere nominal Christians, who are therefore nothing benefited by the religion they profess. A medicine cannot be blamed for not curing those who will not take it. Jesus Christ gave a solemn warning to such as bear His name, but deny Him by their works. Matt. vii. 21-27.

Christianity has raised the English from being ignorant painted savages, grossly intemperate, and offering human sacrifices, to the foremost rank in enlightenment and civilization. The English are yet far from what they *ought* to be ; still they are not what they *once were* ; and they are not what they *will be*.

By quoting cases from criminal courts in England as average specimens of Christians, the moral condition of England may be held to be rotten ; but it is as unjust as it would be to form an estimate of the people of India in a similar fashion.

In London especially, people are often entirely ignorant of their next-door neighbour. Much vice may exist without society being aware of it. The general moral tone is however shown by the "hurricane of indignation" which is awakened at any exposure of the kind.

One grand difference between Christianity and Hinduism is, that the former sternly forbids immorality, while the latter, in some cases, sanctions it. Reference has already been made to the *devadasis* of Southern India, and the girls devoted to Khandoba in the Bombay Presidency. The practices of the Vallabhacharya sect, the Tantric rites of Bengal, and the abominations of the Holi festival, are other illustrations of this.

Individuals and nations, even after their acceptance of Christianity, retain more or less of their natural characteristics. Webster, a distinguished American statesman, says of Great Britain, that it is

"A power which has dotted over the surface of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts, whose morning drum beat, following the sun and keeping com-

pany with the hours, circles the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England."

While this energy has made the Anglo-Saxons the pioneers of Christianity and civilization, the milder graces of the Gospel have not been sufficiently manifest. Among mere nominal professors, arrogance and rudeness have been too often displayed.

On the other hand, the people of India have some excellent qualities. Their religiousness, temperance, patience, gentleness, courtesy, and kindness to their relations, are greatly to be admired. Freed from the debasing influence of idolatry and animated by the spirit of Christ, they would exhibit one of the finest types of character on the face of the globe.

Prospects of Christianity.—Infidels seek to give educated Hindus the impression that Christianity is doomed to perish like Hinduism. Christians have long been accustomed to hear such predictions. In the seventeenth century Voltaire was the cleverest man in Europe. He boasted that it had taken twelve men to set up Christianity, but he would show that a single man was enough to overthrow it. He ventured, too, on a prophecy. He said that in a hundred years the Bible would be a forgotten book. Colonel Olcott, before he came to India, wrote out that Madame Blavatsky was to "tear Christianity to tatters." So far from Christianity being in a dying condition, it was never more vigorous than at present. The increasing number of missionaries in India from nearly every country in Europe, from the United States and Canada, is a visible proof of this. Instead of the Bible being a forgotten book, in 1884 the British and Foreign Bible Society issued in whole or in part upwards

of four million copies. A revised translation of the English Bible was lately printed. The copies prepared by the Oxford University Press alone, if piled flat one upon another, would make a column more than fourteen miles high and every one of them was sold. Madame Blavatsky has only "torn to tatters" her own reputation.

"Never did infidelity," says Rogers, "choose a more luckless moment for uttering its prediction, that poor Christianity is about to die; never was there a moment when its disciples could more confidently repeat the invocation of the sublimest genius that ever consecrated itself to sacred song, when, celebrating the events of his time, he (Milton) 'snatched up an ungarnished present of thank-offering' before he took his 'harp, and sang his elaborate song to generations:' 'Come forth, from thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the kings of the earth; put on the visible robes of thy imperial majesty; take up that unlimited sceptre which thy Almighty Father hath bequeathed thee; for now the voice of thy bride calls thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed!'"

At the banquet given by the National Liberal Club in London in honour of Lord Ripon, Mr. Bright, the well-known friend of India, gave expression to the following views:—

"Well, if the English language is being spoken so widely over India; if the English literature is being read and studied; if the science of this country and of western nations becomes the science of the people of India, what must be the result? Before that force there must fall certain things. There must fall the system of caste, and there must fall the system of a debasing idolatry. These things cannot stand against the literature which is now being freely read and studied by multitudes of the most intelligent people of India."

Milton says, "Let Truth and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worst in free and open encounter."

Acceptance of Christianity.—When Jesus Christ said to the apostles, "Will ye also go away?" Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Some Hindus allow that Christianity is decidedly superior to their own religion; but do not feel that it is their duty, on that account, to embrace it. Men do not act thus in the practical affairs of life. They do not say, Our forefathers had no railways; we will not use them; quinine is a valuable medicine, but it was unknown in former times. The arguments for embracing Christianity are, however, of a far higher character. God will judge those who never heard the Gospel by the light they possessed; but now, as Paul said to the Athenians, "He commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

If the reader acknowledges that there is only one true God, his Father in heaven, he is bound to worship Him and Him alone.

Dr. Jardine, thus refers to an idea prevalent among many educated Hindus with regard to idolatrous rites:—

"It appears to be held that the performance of these rites is a *harmless custom* kept up by female influence and caste laws; and that there is no harm in intelligent men conforming to these customs, since they do not believe in them. But surely there is harm in celebrating a rite, if you have no faith in its value or efficacy; surely there is harm in continuing a custom which is degrading to your own nature as soon as it ceases to be accompanied by faith and earnestness; surely there is harm in practising rites which involve low and degrading conceptions of the Deity, and which for that very reason must be degrading to yourself."

The desire to please parents and relatives, within

proper limits is a praiseworthy feeling ; but to break God's first and great command at the wish of any human being is a plea which cannot be sustained for a moment. Suppose a parallel case. Parents urge a son to take part in a robbery ; they will be vexed if he does not consent. Would a judge accept such an excuse ? Would it be true kindness to his parents to join them in such an act ? Is he not rather bound, not only to abstain entirely from any participation in the crime, but to do his utmost to dissuade his parents from engaging in it ? It would be great cruelty to behave otherwise.

An educated Hindu taking part in idolatrous ceremonies violates his conscience, is guilty of rebellion against God's authority, and is aiding to prolong the reign of idolatry whose lamentable effects so deeply impressed Professor Williams.

Some say that they worship the one true God under the name of Vishnu or Siva. In speaking we are bound to use words in their ordinary sense. It is well-known what Hindus understand by Vishnu or Siva, and to mean something entirely different is fraud. The God of truth is not to be worshipped by hypocrisy. A man is not to deny God by *appearing* a Hindu, when he believes Hinduism to be false.

It is a pseudo-patriotism which rejects Christianity under the pretence that it is not Indian. The greatest Dravidian poet says, " The disease that is born with us kills us ; the medicine which is found on some far-off mountain cures our natal disease."

Some say that they will do more good to their countrymen by not making a profession of Christianity. This argument is fallacious.

Philosophers among the ancient Greeks and Romans condemned polytheism, but they outwardly

conformed to the national creed. The people remained as zealous idolaters as ever. The early Christians separated themselves entirely ; and soon the idol temples were deserted. Reformation is impossible if all adhere to old customs.

The principle itself is wrong. The great question is not, How can I do most good ? but, what is the right course ? Suppose a revenue collector were to defraud Government under the excuse that he could thus give more alms to the poor, support schools, and do other acts of charity : the flimsiness of the pretence would be apparent to all. We are not to do evil that good may come. To benefit our countrymen is not a sufficient reason for violating God's express command. But, as already shown, conformers to idolatry, so far from manifesting true kindness to their relatives, are, in reality, their greatest enemies.

An increase of knowledge brings with it an increase of responsibility which cannot be shaken off. The Gospel is either a source of endless life, or, if rejected, a cause of increased condemnation. It is true that to be faithful to one's conscience will entail some suffering. No reform can be effected without this. It has been said that " God offers to every man his choice between truth and repose ; take which you will, but you cannot have both."

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new."

India will witness a revolution similar to that which has taken place in Europe. (See pp. 6, 7). It will gradually extend over the whole earth. Cowper thus describes it :—

"The groans of Nature in this nether world,
Which Heaven has heard for ages, have an end.
Foretold by prophets and by poets sung,
The time of rest, the promised Sabbath comes. . . .

One song employs all nations and all cry,
"Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain for us!"
The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy,
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous Hosanna round."

In spite of all opposition, this glorious day will come. Blessed are they who are privileged to take part in bringing it about. Unhappy is the man who by his example is opposing it, and seeking to perpetuate the reign of superstition.

This chapter may fitly conclude with one of the latest appeals of the venerable Dr. Krishna Mohan Banerjea of Calcutta to his countrymen:—

"If it were possible for the hoary Rishis to reappear in the world, they themselves would exhort you, nay, beseech you, implore you, perhaps also constrain you not to neglect so great a salvation; not to waver in your duty to acknowledge and embrace the true Prajapati, the true Purusha begotten before the world, who died that you might live, who by death hath vanquished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Denying CHRIST, whether actively or passively, you virtually repudiate everything that is good. Embracing CHRIST, you will find in Him a strength and comfort which your ancient Rishis would have regarded as a most valuable treasure had they lived in these days. You will find in Him everything worthy of your lineage, worthy of your antiquity, worthy of your traditions, and worthy of your education, and at the same time just to your children and to your successors in life."*

* *Oxford Mission Papers, No. I.*

Ashamed to be a Christian!
Afraid the world should know
I'm on my way to Zion,
Where joys eternal flow!
Forbid it, O my Saviour,
That I should ever be
Afraid to wear Thy colour,
Or blush to follow Thee.

Ashamed to be a Christian!
To love my God and King!
The fire of zeal is burning,
My soul is on the wing.
I want a faith made perfect,
That all the world may see
I stand a living witness,
Of mercy, rich and free.

Ashamed to be a Christian!
My guilty fears depart!
I will not heed the tempter
That whispers to my heart.
Dear Saviour, though unworthy,
Yet this my only plea,
Thy all-atoning merit,
For Thou hast died for me.

APPENDIX.

I.—PRAYERS.

PREFATORY NOTE.

PRAYER is the desire of the heart. Each person's circumstances vary. Private prayer is best expressed in our own words, and in the language with which we are most familiar. Still, examples of prayer may be useful in suggesting thoughts.

Additional examples will be found in *Prayers for Students and others*. A copy will be forwarded post-free from the Tract Depôt, Madras, for one anna.

BEFORE READING THE BIBLE.

Lord, open mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law. Teach me Thy statutes; make me to understand the way of Thy precepts. Open, Lord, my understanding, that I may understand the Scriptures; open my heart to attend to the things spoken of in Thy word.

O gracious God and most merciful Father, who hast vouchsafed us the rich and precious jewel of Thy holy word, assist us by Thy Spirit, that it may be written in our hearts to our everlasting comfort, to reform us, to renew us according to Thine own image, to build us up, and edify us into the perfect building of Thy Christ, sanctifying and increasing in us all heavenly virtues. Grant this, heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER READING.

Lord, put Thy Spirit within me, and cause me to walk in Thy statutes, and keep Thy judgments and do them. Grant that I may be filled with the knowledge of Thy will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding ; and that I may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

THE PRAYER WHICH CHRIST TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen.

PRAYER OF A HINDU FOR RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

Heavenly Father, acknowledging my sinfulness, I prostrate myself at Thy feet, beseeching Thy guidance and help.

The creed of my childhood has failed me. The gods whom I ignorantly worshipped instead of Thee, my great Creator, I feel are no gods, and cannot hear my cry. The beacons which I hoped would guide me through life have disappeared from my sight. I grope for my way in doubt and perplexity ; enveloped in spiritual darkness, I wander in the shadow of death.

Bewildered, not knowing where to turn, I beseech

Thee to show me the path of life. Thou art the light in whom there is no darkness. Pour Thy bright beams into my soul, and guide me into Thine eternal truth. Fill me with the childlike spirit which every moment watches Thy hand, and runs to do Thy holy bidding. Enable me to know Thee, the only true God, and out of that knowledge to love Thee, to imitate Thee, to be like Thee.

PRAYER FOR PARDON.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid, I bow myself to the dust before thee, humbly confessing the many sins I have committed against thy Divine Majesty.

Thou art an Ocean of grace. From my birth until now, Thou hast bestowed countless benefits upon me. But I have repaid thy goodness with base ingratitude. I have forgotten Thee, the God who made me, and overlooked the hand that sustained me. Rejecting thy authority and despising thy holy laws, I have walked contrary to thy will. Removing far from thee, I have recklessly wandered in the paths of wickedness. My nature is evil; my deeds are evil; my heart is defiled with sin. Mine iniquities have gone over my head; as a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me; they have taken such hold of me, that I cannot look up.

But in thine infinite compassion Thou didst send Jesus Christ into this world. Has He not by His sufferings made an atonement for sin? Look, I beseech Thee, upon the face of thy beloved Son. Stretch out the arms of thy mercy and receive me as a repentant child. Give me the joy of acceptance, the blessedness of pardon. Say to me, thy sins be forgiven thee. Clothe me with the spotless

robe of Christ's righteousness, and I shall be unblameable in Thy sight.

I desire henceforth to lead a life of purity. But my nature is corrupt. The grace of thy Holy Spirit alone can sanctify me. Graciously bestow him, that dwelling in my heart, He may take away the love of sin, and stamp thine own image upon my soul.

Mercifully grant these my petitions for the sake of thy Son. *Amen.*

PRAYER FOR HOLINESS.

My Father in heaven, I thank thee for graciously calling me to a knowledge of thy truth, and for numbering me among thy people. But, O Lord, I lament the weakness of my faith, the coldness of my love, the feebleness of my attempts to serve thee. Give me grace to make higher attainments in the divine life, to devote myself more entirely to thy service.

Search me, O God, and prove me, and see if there be any wicked way in me : enable me to break off every evil habit, to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset me. Lord, increase my faith. May I look more unto Jesus. May I trust in Him alone for salvation, and receive Him in all his fullness. Give me the sweet assurance that, by a living faith in Him, I have obtained forgiveness of all my sins, and am at peace with Thee. May I realize my sonship ; may I continually abide in Christ. Make me to know more and more the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. Help me always to feel that I am not mine, but thine. May it be my meat and my drink to do thy will.

All my strength must come from thee. Grant me a fresh baptism of thy Holy Spirit. May He come

and take full possession of my soul, constantly inspiring every thought, word, and action. Give me a warm love for all that is good and noble, and a hatred of all things false, and selfish, and vile. Enable me to consecrate every talent which Thou hast given me to the advancement of thy kingdom. Hear me, heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

PRAYER FOR STEADFASTNESS.

Heavenly Father, I bless Thee for enabling me publicly to renounce idolatry, and profess myself Thy follower. But, O Lord, I need Thy gracious aid. Even when Jesus Christ was on earth, many went back and walked no longer with Him. Enable me to continue Thy faithful servant to my life's end.

I shall be exposed to many temptations. Ridicule may await me from companions who scoff at all religion; the friends who once welcomed me may close their doors against me; my dearest relatives, whose affection would have survived every other shock, may turn against me.

But, oh Lord, my greatest trials will come from my own heart: faith may grow dim; love may wax cold; sinful desires which I hoped were rooted out may spring up again; the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things, may cause me to fall away from Thee.

Deeply conscious of my own weakness, I would cry to Thee for help. Let Thy grace be sufficient for me, and Thy strength be made perfect in my weakness. Preserve me from the fear of man which bringeth a snare. O Saviour, be Thou ever near me. Each day may I carry to Thee my distresses

and my temptations; may I set Thee ever before me; may I hear Thee saying to me, Son, thou art ever with me; I will never leave thee; continue thou in my love; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. *Amen.*

DEDICATION TO GOD.*

O Lord, my heavenly Father, I desire now humbly to approach Thee, invited by the name of Thy Son, and trusting in His righteousness and grace. From my birth I have gone astray from Thee; but, in infinite mercy, Thou hast called me, and now I return to Thee, and acknowledge Thy dominion over me. O Lord, do Thou receive me; I desire to be Thine for ever.

Blessed God! from this day do I acknowledge Thee only as my Lord, and give up myself to Thy service. All the members of my body, all the powers of my mind, every thing I possess, would I present to Thee this day: accept them I beseech Thee. I earnestly pray that Thou wouldst give me strength and courage to do Thy will, to live for Thy glory, and to persevere to the very end of my life.

Not only do I set apart all that I am and have to Thy service, but I also submit myself to Thy will. I would leave, O Lord, to Thy management and direction all I possess. Looking on Thee as the righteous Governor of the universe, may I always be enabled to say "Thy will be done."

Use me, O Lord, I beseech Thee, as an instrument of Thy service. Number me among Thine own people. Let my sins be blotted out for the sake of Thy Son. Let me be clothed with His righteous-

* Partly adapted and abridged from Doddridge.

ness; let me be sanctified by His Spirit; change me more and more into His image. Let my life be spent in the light of Thy gracious countenance.

And when the solemn hour of death comes, do Thou then look down with pity, O my heavenly Father, on Thy dying child, and receive my departing spirit into Thy heavenly presence, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

PRIVATE MORNING PRAYER.

O Lord, I thank thee that Thou hast kept me safely through another night, hast given me refreshing sleep, and enabled me, in health and strength, to rise this morning for the duties of another day. All these blessings come from Thee, and I am unworthy of any favour at thy hands.

I have broken thy holy laws, doing the things which I ought not to have done and leaving undone the things I ought to have done. Have mercy upon me and forgive my sins for the sake of Jesus Christ my Saviour. In his name alone I come to Thee. I plead no merits of my own, but trust in his death as my hope of pardon and way of acceptance. Give me assurance of thy forgiveness, and make me thy obedient, loving child.

And now, O Lord, another day is before me. I know not what trials may await me; what temptations may beset me. But I look to Thee. Leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. Make me faithful in every trust; sincere in every word; diligent in every duty; amiable in every temper. Fill my mind with holy thoughts, and purify my heart by the gracious influences of Thy Spirit.

Bless all who are dear to me. Have mercy on

the poor and afflicted ; strengthen the weak ; succour the tempted ; guide the ignorant into the path of knowledge. Let thy way be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee. All I ask is for the sake of thy Son. *Amen.*

PRIVATE EVENING PRAYER.

My Father in heaven, before retiring to rest, I would thank thee for all the blessings of the past day, and seek forgiveness of whatever thy pure eyes have seen amiss in my conduct.

I acknowledge, with shame and sorrow, my many transgressions, my sins of thought, word, and deed. Thou knowest all. Thou lookest into my very heart, and from Thee no secrets are hid. I flee to the Saviour as my only refuge. I shelter myself beneath his righteousness ; I trust to his intercession. Not only pardon me, Lord, but give me grace to serve Thee better in time to come. Sanctify me by thy Holy Spirit. May I love Thee with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength. Enable me to say, whom have I in heaven but Thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. May I grow in meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light.

Bless, O Lord, those who are near and dear to me. Give unto them all I have asked for myself. Help me to try to do them good. Those of them who are still afar off from Thee, do Thou bring near. To those who know and love Thee, give more and more of thy grace. Have mercy on my native land. Prosper all the means employed to spread in it, and throughout the world, the light of the glorious Gospel.

O Thou who never slumberest nor sleepest, I commit myself to Thee for protection through this night. May I rest in peace and awake strengthened for the duties of another day. Hear me for the sake of thy Son. *Amen.*

II.—NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY.

Note.—The precise years of *some* events are not known with certainty. The following table is abridged from Schaff's *Bible Dictionary*.

B.C.

- 4 Birth of Christ.
His return from Egypt.

Death of Herod. Augustus,
Emperor of Rome.
Archelaus, Tetrarch of Judea,
&c. Herod Antipas, Tet-
rarch of Galilee.
Archelaus deposed, and Ju-
dea made a Roman Pro-
vince.

A.D.

- 8 Christ visits the Temple at twelve years of age.
14 Augustus dies, Tiberius sole
Emperor. 14-37.
26 Pontius Pilate Governor of Judea.
27 First year of Christ's Ministry.
28 Second year do.
29 Third year do.
30 April, Death and Resurrection of Christ.
37 Martyrdom of Stephen. Caligula Emperor. 37-41.
Conversion of Saul.
40 Saul's first visit to Jerusalem.
41 Claudius Emperor of Rome. 41-54.
44 James the Elder beheaded. Peter delivered. Acts xii. 2-23.
Paul's second visit to Jerusalem. Acts xi. 30.
45 Paul set apart as an apostle. Acts xiii. 2.
His First Missionary Journey, occupying about a year.
50 Paul's third visit to Jerusalem. Acts xv.
51 Paul sets out on his Second Missionary Journey, occupying
rather more than three years, and including his fourth
visit to Jerusalem.
52 Claudius banishes the Jews from Rome.
53 Paul enters Europe.
Paul writes 1st and 2nd *Thessalonians* from Corinth.
54 Do. Nero Emperor. 54-68.

- A.D.
 54 Paul begins his Third Missionary Journey, occupying about four years.
 56 Paul writes to the *Galatians*.
 57 Paul writes 1st *Epistle to the Corinthians* from Ephesus, 2nd *Epistle* from Macedonia.
 58 Paul writes to the *Romans* from Corinth.
 59 Paul visits Jerusalem the fifth time; is seized and imprisoned for two years at Cæsarea. Acts xxi—xxiv.
 60 Paul appears before Festus, and is sent to Italy. Acts xxv—xxvii.
 61 Paul arrives a prisoner at Rome. Acts xxviii.
 62 Paul writes to the *Ephesians Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians* from Rome.
 63 Paul is supposed to have been released.
 64 Timothy set free. Hebrews xiii: 23.
 Great fire at Rome. First imperial persecution of the Christians.
 64-67 Paul writes 1st *Epistle to Timothy* and *Epistle to Titus*. Paul writes 2nd *Epistle to Timothy* from second Roman captivity.
 67 Paul's Martyrdom at Rome.
 79 Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.
 80-100 John writes his Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation. Death.

III.—PARABLES OF CHRIST.*

PARABLES.

LESSONS.

I.—Recorded in one Gospel only,
 Tares. Matt. xiii.

Good and evil in life and judgment.

Hid Treasure. Matt. xiii.

Value of Gospel.

Goodly Pearl. Matt. xiii.

Christian seeking Salvation.

Draw Net. Matt. xiii.

Visible Church of Christ.

Unmerciful Servant. Matt. xviii.

Danger of Ingratitude.

Labourers in the Vineyard. Matt. xx.

Call at various epochs.

Two Sons. Matt. xxi.

Insincerity and Repentance.

Marriage of King's Son. Matt. xxii.

Need of Righteousness.

Ten Virgins. Matt. xxv.

Watchful and careless Profession.

Ten Talents. Matt. xxv.

Use of Advantages.

* From *Oxford Helps to the Study of the Bible*.

- Sheep and Goats. Matt. xxv. Final Separation of good and bad.
 Seed growing secretly. Mark iv. Gradual growth of Religion.
 The Householder. Mark xiii.
 Two Debtors. Luke vii.
 Good Samaritan. Luke x. Gratitude for Pardon.
 Friend at midnight. Luke xi. Compassion to suffering.
 Rich Fool. Luke xii. Perseverance in Prayer.
 Wedding Feast. Luke xii. Worldly-mindedness.
 Wise Steward. Luke xii. Vigilance towards Second Advent.
 Barren Fig Tree. Luke xiii. Conscientiousness in trust.
 Great Supper. Luke xiv. Unprofitableness under grace.
 Piece of Money. Luke xv. Universality of divine Call.
 Prodigal Son. Luke xv. Joy over Penitence.
 Unjust Steward. Luke xvi. Fatherly love to Penitent Son.
 Rich Man and Lazarus. Luke xv. Preparation for Eternity.
 Unprofitable Servants. Luke xvii. Recompense of future life.
 Unjust Judge. Luke xviii. God's claim to all our Services.
 Pharisee and Publican. Luke xviii. Advantage of persevering Prayer.
 The Pounds. Luke xix. Self-righteousness and Humility.
 Diligence rewarded, Sloth punished.
II.—*Recorded in two Gospels.*
 House on rock and sand. Matt. vii. Luke vi.
 Leaven. Matt. xiii. Luke viii.
 Lost Sheep. Matt. xviii. Luke xv.
III.—*Recorded in three Gospels.*
 New Cloth and old Garment. Matt. ix. Mark ii. Luke v.
 New Wine in old Bottles. Matt. ix. Mark ii. Luke v.
 Sower. Matt. xiii. Mark iv. Luke viii.
 Wicked Husbandmen. Matt. xxi. Mark xii. Luke xx.
 Fig Tree and all the Trees. Matt. xxiv. Mark xiii. Luke xxi.
- Consistent and false Profession.
 Pervading influence of Religion.
 Joy over Penitent.
 New doctrine on old Prejudices.
 New Spirit in unregenerate heart.
 Spread of Gospel.
 Rejection of Christ by Jews.
 Indications of Second Advent.

IV. NEW TESTAMENT VOCABULARY.

Aaron, the brother of Moses, and the first high priest of the Israelites.

Abaddon, Rev. ix. 11, the Hebrew name for Satan, the destroyer. *Apollyon* is the Greek name.

Abba, the Syriac and Hebrew word for father; expressive of love and confidence.

Abel, a son of Adam, killed by his brother Cain.

Abia, in Hebrew, Abijah, one of the 24 courses of priests.

Abilene, a small district in Syria.

Abomination of desolation, Matt. xxiv. 15, the Roman standards which had often figures of idols fixed on them.

Abraham, the great ancestor of the Jews.

Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. 22, a Jewish phrase denoting paradise, or the state of the blessed after death.

Acedamu, field of blood.

Achaia, a district in the south of Greece.

Adoption, Gal. iv. 5, taking a child as one's own. True believers in Christ are received by God as His children.

Adjure, Matt. xxvi. 63, to put upon oath.

Adria, the part of the Mediterranean between Greece and Sicily.

Adultery, Rev. ii. 22, used figuratively for idolatry.

Adversary, 1 Peter v. 8, an enemy, applied to Satan.

Advocate, one who pleads for another. Heb. vii. 25.

Affectioned, disposed.

Agar, the same as *Hagar*, Gal. iv. 25, a female slave, a type of the law.

Agrippa I., *Herod*, a grandson of Herod the Great.

Agrippa II., *Herod*, the brother of Bernice and Drusilla.

Alabaster, a fine whitish stone, made into pots, &c.

Alexandria, a great seaport in Egypt, founded by Alexander the Great, B.C. 332.

Alexandrians, Jews belonging to Alexandria.

Alien, Eph. ii. 12, a stranger, a foreigner.

Allegory, a kind of parable.

Alleluia, or *Hallelujah*, Rev. xix. 1, a Hebrew word, meaning, "Praise ye the Lord."

Aloes, a kind of spice.

Alpha and Omega, Rev. i. 8, the names of the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Jesus calls Himself this to denote that He is from eternity to eternity.

Amen, it is true, so be it, verily. Christ is called the Amen (Rev. iii. 14), because He is truth incarnate.

Amphitheatre, a round building, with seats one above another, for public sports, &c.

Ananias, 1. Acts v. 1-10, the husband of Sapphira, struck dead for lying. 2. Acts xii. 12, a good man through whom Paul's sight was restored. 3. Acts xxiii. 2, a Jewish high priest.

Anathema maramatha, 1. Cor. xvi. 22, "accursed when the Lord cometh." A curse used by the Jews when any one was expelled from the synagogue.

Andrew, the first disciple of Christ, a son of Jonas and the brother of Peter.

Angel, a messenger; one of the holy and happy spirits who do God's will. In Revelation the name is given to the ministers of the churches, ii. 1, 8, 12, 18.

Anna, the same as Hannah, the name of an aged prophetess.

Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest. He held the office before his son-in-law, and retained the title.

Antichrist, 1 John ii. 18, "opposed to Christ." All teachers of false doctrine are antichrist. 2 Thess. ii. 3.

Antioch: 1. The capital of Syria, on the Orontes. Here the disciples were first called Christians. Acts xi. 26. 2. A city in Pisidia, in Asia Minor. Acts xiii. 14.

Apollos, an eloquent Jew of Alexandria, who became a Christian, and preached with great success at Corinth and some other places.

Apollyon, the Greek name of Abaddon, the destroyer.

Apostle, one sent forth; applied chiefly to the twelve men sent forth by Christ.

Appii Forum, Acts xxviii. 15. A market place about 43 miles from Rome.

Apprehend, lay hold on.

Aquila, a Jew, born in Asia Minor, who became a Christian. His wife was called Priscilla.

- Archangel*, 1 Thess. iv. 16, the highest order of angels or the chief angel.
- Archelaus*, a son of Herod the Great, deposed by the Romans.
- Areopagus*, Hill of Mars, a rocky hill in Athens, where a court of justice was held. The judges were called Areopagites.
- Arimathea*, a small town on a hill in Judea, to which Joseph belonged.
- Aristarchus*, a Christian of Thessalonica, who accompanied Paul in his third journey. He was also his fellow-prisoner at Rome. Colossians iv. 10.
- Ark of the Covenant*, a kind of chest in which the stone tables of the law, Aaron's rod, &c., were kept. Hebrews ix. 4.
- Armageddon*, Rev. xvi. 16, a name used figuratively, suggested by a great battle-field in Palestine.
- Asia*, in the New Testament, the western part of Asia Minor.
- Athens*, a city of Greece, famed for its temples and learning, but given to idolatry.
- Atonement*, Rom. v. 11, *at-one-ment*, two persons who were enemies, being made friends—two made one. In Scripture, it relates to the work of Christ, who has made satisfaction for sin, and reconciled us to God.
- Audience*, Luke vii. 1, hearing.
- Augustus Cesar*, the first emperor of Rome. Died 14 A. D.
- Balaam*, Rev. ii. 14, a prophet of Mesopotamia, who taught Balak to seduce the Israelites.
- Barbarian*, a stranger, a foreigner; not necessarily ignorant or savage.
- Barjesus*, * a Jewish sorcerer in Cyprus, known by the Arabic name of *Elymas*, the magician.
- Barabas*, a Levite of Cyprus, who became a Christian. He went with Paul during his first journey.
- Bartholomew*, one of the apostles, supposed to be the same as Nathanael. John i. 45-51.
- Bartimeus*, a blind beggar whose sight was restored by Christ.
- Beasts*, Rev. iv. 6, living creatures.

* The prefix *bar* means *son*.

Beelzebub, "lord of the fly," a name given to Satan. Matt. xii. 24. A god, so called, was worshipped as a protector against flies.

Believe, to trust. Believe on Christ, means *trust* in Christ.

Bethany,* "house of dates," a village on the east side of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem.

Bethesda, "house of mercy," a tank in Jerusalem.

Bethlehem, "house of bread," a town about six miles south of Jerusalem. It was also called *Ephrathah*, "the fruitful."

Bethphage, (beth-fa-jee), "house of figs," a small village on the Mount of Olives.

Bethsaida, "house of fishing," a town in Galilee, on the west side of the Lake of Galilee.

Bewitched, led astray.

Bewray, betray, show.

Bithynia, a province in Asia Minor, south of the Black Sea.

Blasphemy, speaking against God or holy things.

Bottles, Matt. ix. 17, made of skins.

Bowels, used figuratively for the feelings of the heart.
1 John iii. 17, Coloss. iii. 12.

Brûle, Rev. xix. an emblem of the Church of God.

Burnt-offerings, animals offered in sacrifice which were afterwards burnt.

Bushel, a measure, nearly the same as the English peck.

Cæsar, the official title of the Roman emperors, derived from the famous Julius Cæsar.

Cæsarea, a seaport in Palestine, about 50 miles from Jerusalem, built by Herod the Great.

Cæsarea-Philippi, a small town, at the foot of Mount Hermon, near the springs of the Jordan.

Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest when Christ was crucified.

Cain, the eldest son of Adam, who killed his brother Abel.

Calvary, or *Golgotha*, "place of a skull," a low round hill, shaped like a skull, outside Jerusalem.

Cana, a small town in Galilee, near Nazareth.

Canaan, Palestine was so called because it was first settled by Canaan, the grandson of Noah. It was also called the *Holy Land*.

Canaanite, Matt. x. 4, properly Kananite, meaning "zeal."

* *Beth* means *house*.

Capernaum, a town on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, in which Christ chiefly dwelt after leaving Nazareth. It is called "His own city." Matt. ix. 1.

Cappadocia, a province of Asia Minor, north-east of Cilicia.

Careful, Phil. iv. 6, full of care; anxious.

Carnal, under the power of the body; opposed to spiritual purity. Rom. vii. 14.

Carriages, Acts xxi. 15, goods; anything carried.

Castor and Pollux, twin sons of Jupiter, supposed to watch over sailors. The name of a ship in which Paul sailed.

Cedron, or *Kidron*, a small brook flowing through the valley between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives.

Cenchrea, the eastern port of Corinth.

Centurion, a Roman officer, in command of a hundred soldiers.

Cephas, the Aramaic for rock; in Greek, Peter.

Chanaan, Acts vii. 11, the same as Canaan, the oldest name of Palestine.

Charger, a large dish.

Charity, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, love to God and men—a wider meaning than kindness to the poor.

Charran or *Haran*, a town in Mesopotamia in which Abraham lived for a time.

Children of God, those who show a spirit like His.

Chios, an island in the Mediterranean, off the west coast of Asia Minor, now called Scio.

Chorazin, a city in Galilee.

Christ, in Greek, the "anointed;" the same as *Messiah* in Hebrew. It was usual to set apart priests and kings by anointing them.

Church, an assembly. It may denote the whole body of Christians, or those belonging to a particular place.

Cilicia, a province in the south-east of Asia Minor.

Circumcision, a rite of the Jewish religion. The Jews were called "the circumcision;" the Gentiles, "the uncircumcision." Rom. iv. 9.

Clauda, a small island, south of Crete.

Claudius, the Roman emperor who preceded Nero.

Cloak, an outer garment.

Coat, an under garment.

Coasts, borders, districts, whether on the sea-shore or not.

Colony, a city occupied by Roman citizens, governed by their own magistrates.

Colosse, a city in Phrygia, an inland district of Asia Minor.

Come by, Acts xxvii. 16, get hold of.

Communion, intimate fellowship.

Compass, Acts xxviii. 13, a circuit, going round.

Concision, a name given to Judaizing teachers who insisted on Gentiles being circumcised.

Concupiscence, sinful desire.

Convenient, Rom. i. 28, proper.

Conversion, see page 126.

Conversation, Gal. i. 13, conduct; Phil. iii. 20, citizenship.

Corban, a gift to religious purposes.

Core, the Greek form of Korah, punished for rebellion.

Corinth, a large and wealthy city in Greece, on the isthmus joining the peninsula with the mainland.

Council, a Jewish assembly of 72 priests, elders and scribes, over which the high priest presided. It was called the Sanhedrin, and before the Jews were under the Romans, it had power of life and death.

Craft, trade.

Crete, a large island in the Mediterranean, south-east of Greece.

Cup, used figuratively to denote the blessings or judgments of Heaven. The cup of blessing 1 Cor. x. 16, referred to a Jewish custom of passing round a cup of wine after giving thanks.

Curious arts, magic.

Custom, Matt. ix. 9, place of toll.

Cyprus, a large island, in the east of the Mediterranean.

Cyrene, a province and city of Northern Africa, to the west of Egypt. It corresponds with Tripoli.

Dalmatia, a mountainous province to the east of the Adriatic Gulf.

Damascus, a city in Syria, one of the oldest in the world.

Damnation, 1 Cor. xi. 26, condemnation; judgment.

Damned, Mark xvi. 16, condemned.

Daniel, a Jewish prophet, prime minister of Darius. He lived about 550 B.C.

David, the second and greatest king of Israel, the writer of many of the Psalms. He lived about 1050 B.C., and

- was born at Bethlehem, which was called the "city of David."
- David*, Son of, Jesus Christ, descended from David, and like him a King.
- Daystar*, the dawn of spiritual light.
- Decapolis*, (ten cities), cities near the Sea of Galilee.
- Demas*, a fellow-labourer of Paul, who afterwards left him through love of the world.
- Demetrius*, a silversmith at Ephesus, who caused an uproar.
- Demetrius*, a Christian of high reputation at Ephesus, 3 John 12.
- Deputy*, Acts xviii. 12, proconsul, a Roman governor.
- Deril*, the word means *slanderer*. It is sometimes applied to very wicked men or women, but generally it denotes the chief of the evil spirits. It corresponds with the Hebrew, *Satan*, "adversary."
- Diana*, a goddess worshipped at Ephesus, resembling the Indian Sakti.
- Disciples*, scholars, learners; the professed followers of Christ.
- Dispensation*, 1 Cor. ix. 17, stewardship.
- Dispersed*, the Jews scattered after the captivity.
- Divination*, magic, fortune-telling.
- Doctors of the law*, learned teachers of the law of Moses.
- Dorcas*, or *Tabitha*, a kind widow at Joppa, restored to life by Peter.
- Dragon*, Rev. xii. 9, Satan.
- Draught*, Matt. 17, drain.
- Earnest*, 2 Cor. i. 22, a part given in pledge of more to come.
- Easter*, Acts xii. 14, more properly Passover.
- Elamites*, Persians.
- Elias*, or *Elijah*, an Old Testament prophet, taken up to heaven without dying.
- Eliseus*, or *Elisha*, a prophet, the successor of Elijah.
- Elizabeth*, the wife of Zacharias.
- Elymas*, see *Barjesus*.
- Enoch*, a good man, the seventh in descent from Adam, who was taken to heaven without dying.
- Ensample*, example.
- Entreat*, Acts xxvii, entertain.

Ephesus, a city in the west of Asia Minor, famous for its temple of Diana. It was also the seat of one of the Seven Churches of Asia, spoken of in Revelation ii.

Epicureans, followers of Epicurus, a Greek philosopher, who denied a future state, and sought chiefly worldly pleasure.

Epistle, letter.

Esaias, or *Isaiah*, a Jewish prophet who lived about 700 B. C., and wrote one of the books of the Old Testament.

Esau, a son of Isaac, who sold his birthright to his brother Jacob, for a mess of pottage.

Estate of the Elders, the whole Council.

Ethiopia, a country of Africa, to the south of Egypt. The word means burned countenances, or dark coloured.

Eurodydon, a kind of cyclone.

Evangelist, one who makes known good news.

Exorcists, Acts xix. 13, men who pretended to cast out evil spirits and tell fortunes.

Faith, trust, belief.

Farthing, Matt. x. 29, a Roman coin equal to 4 pies. In Mark xii. 42, it is equal to an anna.

Felix, the Roman governor of Judea when Paul was sent as a prisoner from Jerusalem.

Festus, the Roman governor who succeeded Felix.

Fellowship, companionship.

Firkin, 7½ gallons.

Flesh, the body as distinguished from the soul. Col. ii. 5. The unrenewed heart of man. Romans viii.

Gabbatha, a Hebrew word, meaning a raised seat. The floor around was laid with stones, hence it was called the Pavement.

Gabriel, "man of God," an angel.

Galatians, people to the east of the Sea of Galilee, who kept large numbers of swine.

Gainsayers, opposers.

Gaius, a Macedonian Christian at Corinth, at whose house Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans.

Gaius, a Christian to whom John addressed his third Epistle.

Galatia, an inland province of Asia Minor. The inhabitants were originally Gauls from Europe.

Galilee, the northern province of Palestine in the time of Christ.

Galilee, The Sea, a small lake, about 15 miles long and 6 miles broad, through which the Jordan flows. It was also called the *Sea of Tiberias* and the *Lake of Gennesaret*, from cities on its shores.

Galilean, a native of Galilee.

Gallio, the Roman governor at Corinth, before whom Paul was brought. He was afterwards executed by Nero.

Gamaliel, a celebrated Pharisee, a teacher of the law, under whom Paul studied.

Garner, granary.

Gaza, a city in the south-west of Palestine.

Genealogy, Generation, a register of ancestors.

Gennesaret, See *Sea of Galilee*.

Gentiles, nations, all other nations except the Jews.

Gergesenes, probably the same as Gadarenes.

Gerizim, a mountain near Shechem, where the Samaritans had a temple.

Gethsemane, "oil press," a small garden of olive trees near Jerusalem.

Ghost, the Saxon word for spirit. Giving up the ghost, is yielding up the soul at death.

Gog and Magog, Rev. xx. 8. Wild northern nations, used as a figure of the enemies of God's people.

Golgotha, the Hebrew for skull. See *Calvary*.

Gomorrhah, one of the cities, consumed by fire from heaven.

Gospel, good news. Applied also to the books containing the good news.

Grace, the love of God shown in His free favour to man.

Grecians, Jews who spoke Greek.

Greeks, persons Greek by race. In Rom. ii. 9, used for Gentiles.

Hebrews, Jews belonging to Palestine.

Hebrew of the Hebrews, a pure Jew.

Hell, the unseen world. In the New Testament it denotes either the state between death and the judgment Hades, or the state of punishment of lost souls, (Gehenna).

Hermion, a high mountain in the north-east of Palestine.

Herod: 1. *Herod the Great*. 2. *Herod Antipas*, second son of Herod the Great. He put John the Baptist to death, and mocked Jesus. 3. *Herod Agrippa I.*, grandson of

Herod the Great. He was eaten of worms. *Herod*

Agrippa II. He was son of Herod Agrippa I.

Herodians, zealous followers of Herod.

Hosanna, Matt. xxi. 9. "Save now." It was used as a cry of triumph, like *jaya* in India.

Iconium, an inland city in Asia Minor.

Impute, reckon; place to the account of.

Intercession, coming in between two persons, in order to plead for one who has offended.

Isaac, the son of Abraham, and father of Jacob and Esau.

Israel, "the prince that prevails with God," a name given to Jacob, and afterwards to his descendants, the Jews.

Israel of God, Gal. vi. 16, true Christians.

Iturea, a small province in the north-east of Palestine.

Jacob's Well, a deep well near Shechem, in Samaria.

James, the same as Jacob. 1. James the elder, son of Zebedee, and brother of John. He was beheaded by Herod Agrippa I. 2. James the Less. Son of Alphaeus. 3. James, "the brother of the Lord," a leader of the church at Jerusalem, and author of the Epistle.

Jason, a Thessalonian Christian who met with rough treatment for entertaining Paul.

Jeremy, the same as Jeremiah, one of the four great prophets, who lived about 600 B. C.

Jericho, an ancient city about 20 miles east of Jerusalem. It was noted for its palm trees.

Jerusalem, "dwelling of peace," the capital of Palestine, built on four hills.

Jesse, the father of King David.

Jesus, the Greek form of *Joshua*, Saviour. Matt. i. 21.

Jewry, a name for Judea.

Job, a patriarch of Uz, famous for his patience under severe trials.

Joel, a Jewish prophet, who lived about 800 B. C.

John the Baptist, son of Zachariah, the forerunner of Christ.

John, the apostle, a son of Zebedee, and brother of James. He wrote the fourth Gospel, Revelation, and three Epistles.

Jonah, a Jewish prophet, who lived about 840 B. C. Sent with a message to Nineveh, he was swallowed by a great fish, but was afterwards delivered.

Jonas, the Greek form of the Hebrew *Jonah*.

Joppa, now *Jaffa*, the sea-part of Jerusalem.

Jordan, "the descender," the chief river of Palestine, flowing southward into the Dead Sea.

Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy Jew, a member of the great Council, and a disciple of Christ.

Joseph called *Barsabas*, one of the two disciples named to succeed Judas.

Jot, Matt. v. 18, a very small point. The name of the smallest Hebrew letter. *Tittle* means the difference between two letters very much alike.

Juda, or *Judea*, the southern province of Palestine. The tribe of Judah had its possession in this part of the country.

Judgment, Matt. v. 22, one of the Jewish courts of justice.

Judea, *Wilderness of*, a desolate region, south of Jerusalem and west of the Dead Sea.

Judas, the Greek form of the Hebrew *Judah*.

Judas Iscariot, an apostle, the betrayer of Christ, belonging to Kerioth, a town in Judea.

Judas, or *Jude*, a brother of James; and one of the apostles; called also Lebbeus and Thaddeus. He wrote the Epistle of Jude.

Judas of Galilee, the leader of an insurrection.

Judas, surnamed *Barsabas*, a chief man among the disciples at Jerusalem, sent to Antioch.

Jupiter, the chief god of the Greeks and Romans, the Dyans Pitar, or Heaven Father of the ancient Aryans.

Justification, the act of God's free grace, by which He accepts and receives as just and righteous all those who believe in Jesus Christ.

Justus, a Jewish proselyte in Corinth, at whose house Paul preached.

Kingdom of God, *Kingdom of Heaven*, (1) The Gospel dispensation, or the church on earth over which Christ reigns as King, Matt. iii. 2; (2) the gospel as it rules in the hearts of believers, Luke xvii. 21; (3) the state of glory beyond the grave. Matt. viii. 11.

Laodicea, one of the Seven Churches in Asia Minor, re-proved for being neither cold nor hot.

Lawyer, one learned in the law of Moses.

Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary, who was raised from the dead.

Leaven, that which makes bread light; applied also to doctrine.

Lebbens, one of the names of the Apostle Jude.

Legion, a band of soldiers in the Roman army; used in the New Testament for a large, but indefinite number.

Let, Rom. i. 13, hindered.

Levi, the original name of Matthew, the publican, who became an Apostle.

Libertines, Jews. Roman slaves who got their liberty.

Libya, a large country in Africa, to the west of Egypt.

Lot, the nephew of Abraham, whose wife looked back when leaving Sodom, and became a pillar of salt.

Luke, or *Lucas*, a Gentile Christian, the companion of Paul, who wrote the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. Paul calls him the "beloved physician."

Lycaonia, an inland district of Asia Minor.

Lydia, a purple seller of Thyatira, in Asia Minor, baptised at Philippi, the first in Europe.

Lysias, the chief Roman captain at Jerusalem when Paul was imprisoned.

Lystra, a city of Lycaonia, in Asia Minor.

Macedonia, a country in Europe to the north of Greece. Alexander the Great was its celebrated king.

Magdala, a small town on the east of the Sea of Galilee.

Mammon, "riches." It was also a name of the Syrian god of plenty.

Manna, food miraculously given to the Israelites in the desert.

Mark or *Marcus*, or *John Mark*, a native of Jerusalem, probably converted through the Apostle Peter. He went with Paul on his first missionary journey.

Mars' Hill, see *Areopagus*.

Martha, the sister of Mary and Lazarus.

Mary: (1) The Virgin Mary, the wife of Joseph, and mother of Jesus. (2) The sister of Martha and Lazarus. (3) The wife of Cleophas, John xix. 25. (4) The mother of John Mark. (5) Mary Magdalene, probably of Magdala, Luke viii. 2. (6) A Roman Christian, Rom. xvi. 6.

Matthew, first named Levi, a publican, called to be an apostle. He wrote the first Gospel.

Matthias, the apostle chosen to succeed Judas Iscariot.

Mediator, a person who stands between two persons to reconcile them. Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and man.

Melchizedek, a king of Salem, to whom Abraham paid tithes, or gave the tenth part.

Mercurius, a supposed son of Jupiter, and messenger of the gods; also the god of eloquence.

Mesopotamia, the doab between the Tigris and Euphrates.

Messiah, the same meaning in Hebrew as *Christ* in Greek, that is *anointed*.

Michael, "who is like unto God." The prince among the angels.

Miletus, a sea-port in the south-west of Asia Minor, 36 miles from Ephesus.

Miracle, an effect above human or natural power, produced by the power of God.

Mite, the smallest Jewish coin, worth about half a pie.

Morning Star, Rev. xxii, Jesus Christ.

Mortify, Rom. viii. 13, put to death, make to die.

Moses, the leader of the Israelites out of Egypt, and author of the first five books of the Old Testament.

Mote, anything very small.

Mystery, Rome xvi. 25, 26, not some incomprehensible truth, but one which formerly was not revealed, but now is revealed.

Naaman, a Syrian general, a leper, healed by bathing seven times in the Jordan as directed by the prophet Eliseus or Elisha.

Nain, a small town in Galilee, near Mount Tabor.

Naked, John xxi. 7, used of a man who has thrown off his outer coat.

Nathanael, a native of Cana in Galilee, brought to Christ by Philip. He is supposed to have been the same as Bartholomew.

Nazarene, the name given to the people of Nazareth; afterwards applied in contempt to Christians.

Nazareth, a town in Galilee where Jesus was brought up.

Neapolis, "New city," a sea-port in Macedonia.

New Jerusalem, the glorious state of the Church during the millennium.

New Testament, the second part of the Bible.

New Testament, the new covenant made with all nations ;
opposed to the old covenant, made only with the Jews.

Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, who came to
Jesus by night, and afterwards assisted at His burial.

Niccolaitanes, Rev. ii. 6, a sect which departed from the
faith of the Gospel, and fell into wicked practices.

Nicopolis, a city of Macedonia, Titus iii. 12.

Nineveh, a great city, the capital of Assyria, on the Tigris.
The prophet Jonah was sent to warn its people, and
they repented.

Ninth hour, about three o'clock in the afternoon, reckoning
from sun-rise.

Noah, *Noe*, a good man who was saved with his family,
when all other people were destroyed by a flood.

Occupy, trade.

Offence, Matt. v. 29, a cause of stumbling.

Olivet, the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem.

Onesimus, a runaway slave who was converted and sent
back to Philemon, his master, with a letter from Paul.

Oracles, a divine communication ; the Scriptures.

Or ever, before.

Osee, the same as Hosea the prophet.

Pamphylia, a province in the south of Asia Minor.

Paphos, a town in the west of Cyprus, notorious for the
worship of Venus.

Parable, a placing side by side for comparison. A story
from natural objects to instruct in spiritual things.

Paradise, a Persian word, meaning a *pleasant garden*. In
the New Testament, the state of the blessed after
death.

Parcel, small part.

Parthians, Persians.

Passion, Acts i. 3, used in the old sense of suffering.

Passover, a Jewish feast so called from the angel *passing*
over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, when the
first born of the Egyptians were destroyed.

Patmos, a small rocky island, off the west coast of Asia
Minor, in which the Apostle John was confined.

Paul, "little," Greek, *Saul*, "asked for," Hebrew ; the
great apostle of the Gentiles, born at Tarsus in Cilicia.

- Matthias*, the apostle chosen to succeed Judas Iscariot.
- Mediator*, a person who stands between two persons to reconcile them. Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and man.
- Melchizedek*, a king of Salem, to whom Abraham paid tithes, or gave the tenth part.
- Mercurius*, a supposed son of Jupiter, and messenger of the gods; also the god of eloquence.
- Mesopotamia*, the doab between the Tigris and Euphrates.
- Messiah*, the same meaning in Hebrew as *Christ* in Greek, that is *anointed*.
- Michael*, "who is like unto God." The prince among the angels.
- Miletus*, a sea-port in the south-west of Asia Minor, 36 miles from Ephesus.
- Miracle*, an effect above human or natural power, produced by the power of God.
- Mite*, the smallest Jewish coin, worth about half a pie.
- Morning Star*, Rev. xxii, Jesus Christ.
- Mortify*, Rom. viii. 13, put to death, make to die.
- Moses*, the leader of the Israelites out of Egypt, and author of the first five books of the Old Testament.
- Mote*, anything very small.
- Mystery*, Rome xvi. 25, 26, not some incomprehensible truth, but one which formerly was not revealed, but now is revealed.
- Naaman*, a Syrian general, a leper, healed by bathing seven times in the Jordan as directed by the prophet Eliseus or Elisha.
- Nain*, a small town in Galilee, near Mount Tabor.
- Naked*, John xxi. 7, used of a man who has thrown off his outer coat.
- Nathanael*, a native of Cana in Galilee, brought to Christ by Philip. He is supposed to have been the same as Bartholomew.
- Nazarene*, the name given to the people of Nazareth; afterwards applied in contempt to Christians.
- Nazareth*, a town in Galilee where Jesus was brought up.
- Neapolis*, "New city," a sea-port in Macedonia.
- New Jerusalem*, the glorious state of the Church during the millennium.
- New Testament*, the second part of the Bible.

New Testament, the new covenant made with all nations; opposed to the old covenant, made only with the Jews.

Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, who came to Jesus by night, and afterwards assisted at His burial.

Niccolaitanes, Rev. ii. 6, a sect which departed from the faith of the Gospel, and fell into wicked practices.

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Peany, a silver coin, worth about five annas.

Pentecost, "fiftieth," a feast of the Jews kept on the fiftieth day after the passover. It was held at the close of the harvest, as a thanksgiving day.

Pergamos, one of the Seven Churches in Asia Minor.

Peter, "rock," Greek, *Cephas*, Syriac; the brother of Andrew, and a leading apostle.

Pharisee "separated," the chief sect among the Jews. See page 29.

Pharaoh, a name given to the Egyptian line of kings in ancient times.

Phenice, a sea-port in the west of Crete.

Phœnicia, a Syrian province on the coast, north of Palestine. Tyre and Sidon were two of its cities.

Philadelphia, a city in the west of Asia Minor.

Philemon, the owner of the slave Onesimus, to whom Paul sent a letter. He lived at Colosse in Asia Minor.

Philip, one of the seven chosen to take care of the poor, but who also preached a great deal.

Philippi, a city in Macedonia, so called after Philip, the father of Alexander the Great.

Philippians, an Epistle written to the Church at Philippi from Rome by Paul.

Philosophy, "love of wisdom." In Colossians ii. 8, it denotes false wisdom, leading men away from the Gospel.

Phrygia, a large inland province of Asia Minor.

Phylacteries, "safe guards," strips of parchment, containing passages from the law of Moses, fastened on the forehead, &c., supposed to act as charms to ward off evil.

Piece of silver, a shekel, worth about Rs. 1½, Matt. xvii. 27.

Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea, when Jesus was crucified.

Pisidia, a province of Asia Minor, north of Pamphylia.

Platter, a large flat dish.

Pontus, "the sea," a province of Asia Minor, south of the Black Sea.

Pound, in Roman money 100 pence, equal to about Rs. 30. Luke xix. 13.

Prætorium, the part of the governor's palace which was the hall of justice.

Pricks, sharp-pointed sticks, used for driving cattle.

Prophet, "speaker," one who makes known God's will; sometimes one who foretells events.

Propitiation, that which turns away wrath from a sinner. Christ is our propitiation or atonement.

Proselyte. See page 30.

Provoke, Heb. x. 24, to excite in a good sense.

Ptolemais, a sea-port of Palestine, now called Acre.

Publican, tax-gatherer. The Jews considered it wrong to collect taxes for heathen Romans.

Purge, make pure.

Purple, a colour obtained from a shell fish, which was very costly.

Puteoli, a city in Italy, near Naples.

Quaternion, a band of four.

Queen of the South, the Queen of Sheba, who came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

Quick, 2 Tim. iv. 1, the living.

Quickened, made alive spiritually.

Rabbi, *Rabboni*, "master," titles given to great teachers of the law.

Raca, Matt. v. 22, a word expressing great contempt and hatred. Its use exposed a man to punishment from the council of elders.

Rachel, a wife of Jacob, from whom the Israelites were descended. See page 41.

Reconciliation, a restoration to the favour of God.

Redemption, the ransom paid for a prisoner of war; deliverance from sin and its consequences by the offering of Christ.

Regeneration, the new spiritual birth; a change from a life of sin to holiness.

Reins, Rev. ii. 23, a part of the body considered the seat of the affections.

Remphan, a god secretly worshipped by the Israelites.

Repentance, a change of mind, leading to a change of conduct.

Resurrection, the rising again from the dead. See 1 Corinthians xv.

Revelation, a making known what is hidden; the last book of the New Testament. See page 160.

Rhodes, an island off the west coast of Asia Minor.

Right eye, Matt. v. 29, the dearest object.

Righteousness, holiness.

Rome, the capital of Italy, and in ancient times the greatest city in the world.

Ruler, John iii. 1, a member of the Jewish great council.

Sabaoth, a Hebrew word, meaning armies.

Sabbath, "rest," the seventh day of the week, which the Jews kept holy.

Sabbath day's journey, as far the Jews might travel on Sabbath,—about three-quarters of a mile.

Sacrifice, offering the life of an animal is an acknowledgment of sin deserving death.

Sadducees, a Jewish sect. See page 30.

Saints, holy persons.

Salem, a contraction for *Jerusalem*.

Salome, the wife of Zebedee, and mother of James and John.

Samarita, the middle province of Palestine, between Galilee in the north, and Judea in the south.

Samaritans, see page 30.

Sarah, the wife of Abraham, the great ancestor of the Jews.

Sardis, a city of Lydia, in the west of Asia Minor.

Sarepta, in Hebrew *Zarephath*, a town on the Mediterranean, between Tyre and Sidon.

Saron, or *Sharon*, "the plain," a rich plain on the coast of Palestine, south of Carmel.

Satan, "adversary," the chief evil spirit.

Saul, son of *Cis* or *Kish*, the first king of Israel.

Saul, the Hebrew name of the apostle Paul.

Scribes, see page 30.

Scrip, small bag.

Scythians, wandering tribes of Central Asia.

Seed, descendants.

Shamefacedness, 1 Tim. ii. 9, modesty.

Shew-bread, bread offered weekly in the Jewish temple.

Sidon, a seaport in Phœnicia, north of Tyre.

Silas, *Silvanus*, a Christian of Antioch, the companion of Paul in several of his journeys, and his fellow-prisoner at Philippi.

Siloam, "sent," the name of a tank near Jerusalem.

Simon, contracted from *Simeon*. 1. Simon Peter. 2. Simon the Canaanite, or Simon Zelotes. 3. Simon the sorcerer.

in Samaria. 4. A Pharisee. Luke vii. 36. 5. A man of Cyrene, forced to bear the cross. 6. A tanner at Joppa, with whom Peter lodged.

Slow bellies, Titus i. 12, lazy gluttons.

Smyrna, a large seaport on the west coast of Asia Minor.

Sodom, *Sodomo*, a city destroyed by fire from heaven on account of the wickedness of its inhabitants.

Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel, famous for his riches and wisdom.

Soothsaying, fortune-telling.

Sorcerer, magician; fortune-teller.

Sosthenes, a ruler of the Jewish synagogue at Corinth, who was beaten.

Soul, this sometimes denotes the mere animal life.

Spirit, the immortal part of man, the soul properly so called a living being without a body, as angels.

Stephanas, one of the earliest converts at Corinth, who was baptized by Paul.

Stephen, one of the seven deacons, and the first Christian martyr.

Stoics, philosophers so called from Zeno, the founder, teaching in a *stoa*, or porch. Of the ancient sects they were the most strict with regard to moral virtue. They pretended to be indifferent to joy or grief.

Straitest, strictest.

Strawed, *strewed*, spread; Matt. xxv. 24, winnowed.

Stricken, Luke i. 7, advanced.

Swaddling clothes, clothes wrapped round infants.

Sycamine, the black mulberry tree.

Sycamore, a kind of fig tree.

Synagogue, a Jewish place of worship.

Syria, a large province to the north of Palestine. The chief city was Damascus.

Tabernacle, a tent; it is applied specially to the large tent erected by Moses in the wilderness.

Tabitha, or *Dorcas*, a widow of Joppa, restored to life by Peter.

Talent, a talent of silver was about Rs. 2,400; a talent of gold about Rs. 54,5750.

Tares, a kind of weed, resembling grain.

Tarsus, on the Cydnus, the capital of Cilicia, a province in the south-east of Asia Minor. It was the birth-place of Paul.

Temple, the great Jewish place of worship, built in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah.

Tempt, to try ; to entice into sin ; to try to ensnare.

Testament, see page 17.

Tetrarch, a governor of a fourth part ; but sometimes applied to a governor of a larger portion.

Theophilus, "friend of God," a Gentile convert to whom Luke addressed the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles.

Thessalonica, a sea-port in Macedonia, now called Saloniki. See page 157.

Theudas, a Jew who raised an insurrection, which was soon put down.

Thomas, called *Didymus*, the apostle hard to convince of the resurrection of Christ.

Thought, Matt. vi. 34, anxiety.

Thyatira, a town in Asia Minor, to which Lydia, the seller of purple, belonged, and the seat of one of the Seven Churches of Asia.

Tiberias, a town on the south-west of the Sea of Galilee, so called after the Roman Emperor, Tiberius.

Timothy, a native of Derbe or Lystra, who became the companion of Paul, and to whom he addressed two of his Epistles.

Title, see *Jot*.

Titus, a Gentile converted to Christianity under Paul. He was the companion of Paul in many of his journeys, and to him Paul addressed one of his Epistles.

Traditions of the elders, sayings handed down, but not contained in the Scriptures.

Tribute-money, a half shekel (about 10 as.) paid yearly.

Troas, a sea-port on the west coast of Asia Minor, supposed to be near the site of ancient Troy, famous for its ten years' siege by the Greeks.

Trow, think.

Trump, trumpet.

Tychicus, a companion of Paul.

Tyre, a sea-port of Phœnicia, in ancient times the greatest sea-port in the world.

Uction, 1 John ii. 20, anointing, referring to the outpouring of the grace of the Holy Spirit upon the soul.

Usury, interest.

Veil, Matt. xxvii. 5, a beautiful curtain in the temple, dividing the holy from the most holy place.

Verily, truly.

Virtue, Mark v. 30, healing power.

Vow, a religious promise to do certain things.

Ware, aware, expected.

Watch, the time a soldier kept guard. The Jews divided the night into four watches.

Wax, Matt. xxiv. 12, grow, become.

Whisperers, Rom. i. 29, secret slanderers.

Wist, wit, knew, know.

Worship, Luke xiv. 12, honour.

Yoke-fellow, companion in labour.

Zaccheus, a rich publican of Jericho, who climbed a tree to see Christ.

Zacharias, or *Zachariah*, a priest, the father of John the Baptist.

Zebedee, the husband of Salome, and father of the apostles James and John.

Zebulon, a Jewish tribe whose share of Palestine lay west of the Sea of Galilee.

Zion, Sion, one of the hills on which Jerusalem was built. The name "Daughter of Zion" was sometimes given to the city.

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